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Annie Leeke - 1879 -

Godfrey Russell

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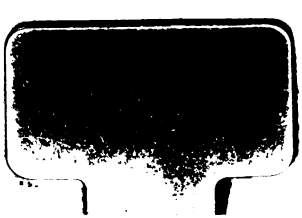

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THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

VOL. III.

Be hush'd, my dark Spirit! for Wisdom condemns,
When the faint and the feeble deplore;
Be strong as the rock of the ocean, that stems
A thousand wild waves on the shore—
Thro' the perils of Chance, and the scowl of Disdain,
May thy front be unaltered, thy courage elate!
Ah! even the name I have worshipp'd in vain,
Shall awake not the sigh of remembrance again!
To bear, is to conquer our fate!

CAMPBELL.

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C. Stower, Printer, Pater-noster Row.

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THADDEUS

OF

WARSAW.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

Loin d'aimer la guerre, il l'abhorre;
En triomphant même il deplore
Les desastres qu'elle produit:
Et couronné par la victoire,
Il gémit de sa propre gloire,
Si la paix n'en est pas le fruit.

BY

MISS PORTER.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME,
PATER-NOSTER ROW.

1806.

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THADDEUS of WARSAW.

CHAP. I.

WHEN Thaddeus awoke next morning he found himself more refreshed, and free from the effects of the last night's discovery, than he could have reasonably hoped. The presence of mind, and activity, which the fire called on him to exert, having forced his thoughts into a different channel, afforded his nerves an opportunity to regain some portion of their usual strength. He could now reflect on what he had heard, without suffering the crimes of another to lay him on the rack. The reins were again restored to his hands; and neither agitation, nor anxiety, shewed themselves in his face or manner.

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Though the Count's sensibility was very irritable, and, when suddenly attacked, it was not always that he could conceal his emotion; yet he possessed a power of look which immediately repressed the impertinence of curiosity. Indeed, this mantle of repulsion proved to be his best shield; for never had man more demands on the dignity of his soul, to shine out about his person.

Not unfrequently, when Miss Dundas, aided by the ridicule of half a dozen pretty beaux and belles was schooling her sister on the absurd civilities, which she paid to her language-master, has the sudden appearance of the Count, at once called a natural glow through the ladies' rouge, and silenced the gentlemen.

The morning after the fire, a little bevy of fashionable butterflies were collected, in this way, at one corner of Miss Dundas's study, when, during a moment's pause, "I hope, Miss Beaufort," cried the Honourable Mr. Lascelles, (a young man of

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of the stamp, which usually wears the impression of the last speaker,) "I hope, Miss Beaufort, you don't intend to consume the brightness of your eyes over this stupid language?"

"What language, Mr. Lascelles?" inquired she, "I have this moment entered the room, and I don't know what you are talking about."

"Good Lud, that is very true;" cried he, "I mean a shocking jargon, which a shocking penseroso man teaches to these ladies. We want to persuade Miss Euphemia that it spoils her mouth."

"You are always misconceiving me, Mr. Lascelles;" interrupted Miss Dundas impatiently, "I did not advance one word against the language; I merely remonstrated with Phemy against her preposterous attentions to the man we hire to teach it."

"That was what I meant, Madam," resumed he, with a low bow.

"You meant what, Sir?" demanded the

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little beauty, contemptuously, "but I need not ask. You are like a bad mirror, which, from radical defect, always gives false reflections."

"Very good, efaith, Miss Euphemia! I declare, sterling wit! It would do honour to Sheridan, or your sister."

"Mr. Lascelles," cried Euphemia, more vexed than before, "let me tell you such impertinence is very disgraceful in a gentleman."

"Upon my soul, Miss Ephemia!"

"Pray allow the petulent young lady to get out of her airs, (as she has, I believe, got out of her senses,) without our help;" exclaimed Miss Dundas, "for I declare to Heaven, I know not where she picked up these vile democratic ideas."

"I am not a democrat, Dianna;" answered Euphemia, rising from her seat; "and I won't stay to be abused, when I know it is all envy, because Mr. Constantine

stantine happened to say that I have a quicker memory than you have."

She left the room as she ended. Miss Dundas, ready to storm with passion, but striving to conceal it, burst into a violent laugh, and turning to Miss Beaufort, "You see, my dear," said she, "a sad specimen of Euphemia's temper; yet I hope you won't think too severely of her; for, poor thing! she has been spoilt by us all."

"Pray do not apologize to me in particular!" replied Miss Beaufort, rather coldly; "but, as you have done so, I am induced to say, that I think it probable she would have shewn her temper less, had you given your admonition in private; though I cannot doubt of her having committed something wrong."

"Yes, something very wrong; exclaimed Miss Dundas, reddening at a rebuke from a quarter whence she so little expected one; "both Mr. Lascelles and Lord Berrington there—"

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"Don't bring in my name, I pray, Miss Dundas;" cried the Viscount, who was sitting in a recess, looking over an old edition of Massinger's plays; "you know I hate being squeezed into squabbles."

Miss Dundas dropped the corners of her mouth in contempt, and went on.

"Well then, Mr. Lascelles and Miss Poyntz here, have both, at different times, been present, when Phemy conducted herself in a very ridiculous way towards a young man, whom Lady Tinemouth made a great fuss about, sending to teach us German. Can you believe it possible, that a girl of her fashion could behave in this style, without having first imbibed some very dangerous notions? I am sure that I am right, for she treats him with three times the politeness, which she uses to the gentlemen who are now in the room." Miss Dundas, supposing that she had set the business in a light beyond controversy, stopped

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stopped with an air of triumph. Miss Beaufort perceived that her answer was expected.

"I really cannot discover any thing in the affair so very reprehensible;" observed she, "perhaps the man you speak of, may have talents and worth; he may be above his situation."

"Ah! above it, sure enough!" cried Lascelles, laughing boisterously at his own folly, "he is tall enough to be above every thing, even good manners; for, notwithstanding his plebeian calling, I don't find that he knows how to keep his distance."

"I am sorry for that, Lascelles," cried Berrington, measuring the puppy with his good-natured eye, "for these Magog men, are terrible objects to us of meaner dimensions! '*A substitute shines brightly as a king until a king be by.*"

"Why, my lord, you do not mean to compare me with such a low fellow

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as this? I don't understand, Lord Berrington—"

"Bless me, gentlemen!" cried Miss Dundas, frightened at the angry looks of the little Honourable, "why, my lord, I thought you hated squabbles."

"So I do, Miss Dundas;" replied he, laying down his book, and coming forward, "and, upon my honour, Mr. Lascelles," added he, smiling, and turning towards the coxcomb, who stood nidging his head with anger, by Miss Beaufort's chair; "upon my honour, Mr. Lascelles, I did not mean to draw any parallel between your person and talents and those of this Mr.———, I forget his name, for truly I never saw him in my life; but, I dare swear, no comparison can exist between you."

Lascelles took the surface of this speech, and bowed; whilst his lordship, turning to Miss Beaufort, began to compliment himself, on possessing so fair an ally, in defence of the absent person.

"I never

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"I never have seen him;" replied she, "and, what is more, I never heard of him, till, on entering the room, Mr. Lascelles attacked me for my opinion. I only arrived from the country last night, therefore, I am quite at a loss to guess the real grounds of this ill-judged bustle of Miss Dundas's, about a man whom she styles despicable. If he be so, why retain him in her service? And, what is more absurd, why make a person in that subordinate situation, the subject of debate amongst her friends?"

"You are right, Miss Beaufort," returned Lord Berrington; "but the eloquent Miss Dundas is so kind to her friends, that she lets no opportunity slip, of displaying her power, both over the republic of words, and the empire of her mother's family."

"Are you not severe now, Lord Berrington? I thought you merciful to the poor tutor."

"No; I hope I am just on both sub-

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jects. I know her; and it is true that I have seen nothing of the tutor; but it is natural to wield the sword in favour of the defenceless, and I always regard the absent in that light."

Whilst these two conversed at one end of the room, the other groupe, were arraigning the presumption of the vulgar, and the folly of them who gave it encouragement.

At a fresh burst of laughter from Miss Dundas, Miss Beaufort turned her head, as we mechanically do, on hearing an unexpected noise; her eye was arrested by the appearance of a gentleman in black, who was standing a few paces within the door. He was regarding the party before him, with that lofty tranquillity, which is inseparable from high rank, when it is accompanied by virtue. His figure, his face, and his air, contained that pure simplicity of contour, which, at the same time, pourtrays all

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the graces of youth with the dignity of manhood.

Miss Beaufort in a moment perceived that he was unobserved; and, rising from her seat, "Miss Dundas," said she, "here is a gentleman."

Miss Dundas looked round carelessly.

"You may sit down, Mr. Constantine.

"Gracious Heaven!" thought Miss Beaufort, as he approached, and the ingenuous expression of his fine countenance was directed towards her, "Can this noble creature have been the subject of such impertinence!"

"I commend little Phemy's taste;" whispered Lord Berrington, leaving his seat; "ha! Miss Beaufort, a young Apollo?"

"And not in disguise!" replied she in the same manner, just as Thaddeus had bowed to her; and, with, '*veiled lids,*' was taking up a book from the table; not to read, but literally to have

an

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an object to look on, which could not insult him.

"What did Miss Dundas say was his name?" whispered the Viscount.

"Constantine, I think."

"Mr. Constantine," said the benevolent Berrington, "will you accept of this chair?"

Thaddeus declined it. But the viscount read in the '*proud humility*' of his bow, that he had not always waited, like a dependent, on the nods of insolent men and women of fashion; and, with a good-humoured compulsion, he added, "Pray oblige me, for by that means I shall have an excuse to squeeze into the *Sultane* which is so '*happy as to bear the weight of Beaufort!*"

Though Miss Beaufort was almost a stranger to his lordship, having only seen him once before, (for ten minutes, and that hardly,) with her cousin in Leicestershire, she smiled at this unexpected freedom, and, in consideration of the

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the motive, made room for him on the sofa.

Insult was not swifter than kindness, in its passage to the heart of Thaddeus; who, whilst he received the Viscount's chair, raised his face towards him with a look, beaming such graciousness and obligation, that Miss Beaufort turned with renewed contempt on the party, who were leaving the study.

The instant Miss Dundas closed the door after her, Lord Berrington exclaimed, "Upon my honour, Mr. Constantine, I have a good mind to put that terrible pupil of your's into my next comedy! Don't you think she would beat Katherine and Petruchio all to nothing? I declare I will have her."

"In *propria persona*, I hope?" asked Miss Beaufort, with more bitterness than she was accustomed to conceive, much less approve, by giving it expression.

The Count remained silent during these remarks, though he fully appreciated

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ciated the first civil treatment which had greeted him since his admission within the doors of Lady Dundas. Miss Euphemia's attentions owned any other source than benevolence.

Miss Beaufort wished to relieve his embarrassment by addressing him; but the more she thought, the less she knew what to say; and she had just abandoned it as a vain attempt, when Euphemia entered the room alone. She curtsied to Thaddeus, and took her place at the table. Lord Berrington rose.

"I must say good bye, Miss Euphemia; I will not disturb your studies. Farewel, Miss Beaufort," added he, addressing her, and bending his lips to her hand, "adieu! I shall look in upon you to-morrow. Good morning, Mr. Constantine."

Thaddeus bowed to him, and the Viscount disappeared.

"I am surprised, Miss Beaufort," observed Euphemia pettishly, her temper not

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not having subsided since her sister's lecture, "how you can endure that coxcomb!"

"Pardon me, Euphemia," replied she, "though I did not exactly expect the ceremony his lordship uses in taking leave, yet I think that there is a generosity in his sentiments which deserves a better title."

"I know nothing about his sentiments, for I always run away from his conversation. A better title! I declare you make me laugh. Did you ever see such fantastical dressing? I vow to heaven, I never meet him without thinking of Jemmy Jessamy, and the rest of the gossomer beaux, who squired our grandmothers!"

"My acquaintance with Lord Berrington is trifling;" returned Miss Beaufort, withdrawing her eyes from the pensive features of the Count, who was sorting the lessons: "Yet I am so far prepossessed in his favour, that I see little

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little in his appearance to apprehend. However, I will not contest that point, as, perhaps, the philanthropy, I this morning discovered in his heart; the honest warmth, with which he defended a traduced character, after you left the room, might render his person as charming in my eyes, as I certainly found his mind."

Thaddeus had not, for a long time, heard such sentiments out of Lady Timemouth's circle; and he now looked up, to take a distinct view of the speaker.

In consequence of the established mode, that the presiding lady of the house is to give the tone to her guests, many were the lords and ladies who sat with the Count in Miss Dundas's library whose faces he was as ignorant of, when they went out, as when they came in. They took little notice of him; and he, regarding them much less, pursued his occupation, without evincing a greater con-

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consciousness of their presence, than what mere ceremony demanded.

Accordingly, this morning, when, in compliance with Lord Berrington's politeness, he received his chair, and saw him remove to a sofa, beside a very beautiful woman, he supposed that she resembled the rest of Miss Dundas's friends, and never directed his eyes a second time to her figure. But when he heard her (in a voice that was melody itself) defend his lordship's character, on principles, which bore the most honourable testimony to her own, his eyes rivetted themselves on her face.

Though a long muslin wrapper involved her fine person, a modest grace was observed in every limb. Her snowy arm, clasped with a loose pearl bracelet, was extended towards Euphemia in the energy of her defence; her beautiful eyes shone with benevolence, and her rosy lips seemed to breathe balm whilst she spoke.

Thaddeus

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Thaddeus did not withdraw his fixed eyes, until they encountered those of Miss Beaufort, which immediately retreated, with a deep blush covering her face and neck. She never had met such a look before,—except from the dark and penetrating glances of her cousin, who had long elected himself the guardian of her heart.

Miss Beaufort was the orphan heiress of Admiral Beaufort, the only brother of the late Lady Somerset. Her parents dying at an early age, bequeathed her to the care of Lady Somerset, her paternal aunt; and nominated Sir Robert Somerset, her ladyship's husband, to be her sole guardian. When Lady Somerset died, which happened three days before her son's arrival from the Continent, a double portion of Sir Robert's love fell upon this niece. In her society alone, he found comfort; and, relinquishing the splendid scenes of London, he retired into the country; living sometimes at one

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one seat, and sometimes at another, in hopes, by change of place, to dissipate some of the grief which crowded round his heart.

Sir Robert Somerset, from the time that his marriage took place with Miss Beaufort, to the hour in which he followed her to the grave, attracted esteem and affection from people of every rank. The fascination of his manners, united with the inflexible probity of his character, both as a man and as a senator, drew after him the confidence of all men. The good, and even the bad, looked on him as a pillar of strength, whenever reliance was to be allied with virtue. For instance, the excellent Lord Arun, consigned his only child to his protection; and that sordid peculator, Sir Hector Dundas, when he descended to *Hades*, named Sir Robert Somerset, to be the principal trustee, over the immense fortunes of his wife and daughters.

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This latter circumstance, explains the intimacy between two families, the female parts of which, might otherwise never have met.

On Sir Robert's last visit to London, Lady Dundas became so urgent in requesting Miss Beaufort to spend the ensuing season with her in town, that he could not, without absolute rudeness, refuse. In compliance with this arrangement, Miss Beaufort, accompanied by Mrs. Dorothy Somerset, a maiden sister of the Baronet's, quitted Deerhurst, and settled themselves in Harley-street for the remainder of the winter; —at least, the winter of fashion; which, by a strange effect of her magic hand, in defiance of grassy meadows, leafy trees, and sweetly scented flowers, extends its nominal sceptre, over the vernal months of April, May, and even the rich treasures of "*resplendent June.*"

The summer part of this winter, Miss Beaufort reluctantly consented should be

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be sacrificed to ceremony, in the dust and heat of a great city; and if the melancholy, which encreased upon Sir Robert, every day since the death of his wife, had not rendered her averse to oppose his wishes, she certainly would have made objections to the visit.

During their journey, she could not refrain from drawing a comparison between the insipid routine of Lady Dundas's way of life, and the rational, as well as splendid arrangement of her late aunt.

Lady Somerset's monthly assemblies, were not only the most elegant and brilliant parties about town, but her weekly *conversasiones* surpassed every thing of the kind in the kingdom. On these nights, her ladyship's rooms, used to be filled with the most eminent characters, which England could produce. There, the young Mary Beaufort, whose ardent disposition, impelled with a comet's velocity,

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city, to the feet of Genius, listened to pious divines of every Christian persuasion: there, she gathered wisdom from real philosophers; and, in the society of our best living poets, cherished an enthusiasm for all that is great and good. Sir Robert Somerset's house, on these evenings, reminded the visitor, of what he had read, or imagined, of the School of Athens. He beheld, not only sages, soldiers, statesmen, and poets, but intelligent and amiable women; amongst whom, the beautiful Mary, imbibed that steady reverence of virtue and talent, which no intermixture with the common *ephemera* of the day, could either displace or alloy.

Notwithstanding this freedom from the chains, with which her fashionable advisers would have shackled her mind, Miss Beaufort possessed too much judgment and delicacy, to flash her liberty in their eyes. Enjoying her independence with meekness, she held it more secure.

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secure. Mary was no declaimer; not even in defence of oppressed goodness, or injured genius. Aware that direct opposition, often incenses malice, she directed the shaft from its aim, if it were in her power; and when the attempt failed, strove, by respect or compassion, to heal what she could not prevent. Thus, whatever she said or did, bore the stamp of her soul, whose leading attribute was modesty. By having learnt much, and thought more, she proved, in her conduct, that reflection is the alchymy, which turns knowledge into wisdom.

Never was Miss Beaufort incapable of attempting something towards her benevolent intention, until she witnessed the Count Sobieski, standing under an over-bearing insolence, which his dignified composure rebounded upon his insulters. The situation was new to her; and when she dropped her confused eyes, beneath his unexpected gaze, she marvelled

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velled within herself, at the ease with which she had taken up the cause of Lord Berrington, and the difficulty she found, to summon one word as a repellant, to the unmerited attack on the man before her.

Euphemia cared nothing about Lord Berrington; to her, his faults, or his virtues, were alike indifferent; and forgetting that civility demanded some reply to Miss Beaufort's last observation; or rather taking advantage of the tolerated privilege usurped by many high-bred people, of being ill-bred, when and how they please; she returned to Thaddeus, and said, with a forced smile,

"Mr. Constantine, I don't like your opinion upon the ode I shewed to you; I think it a very absurd opinion; or perhaps you did not conceive me rightly?"

Miss Beaufort took up a book, that her unoccupied attention might not disturb their studies.

Euphemia

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Euphemia resumed, with a more natural dimple, and touching his glove with the rosy points of her fingers,

"You are stupid at translation."

Thaddeus coloured, and sat uneasily; he knew not how to evade this direct, though covered attack.

"I am a bad poet, Madam. Indeed it would be dangerous for a good one, to attempt the same path with Sappho and Phillips."

Euphemia now blushed as deeply as the Count, but from another motive; and opening her grammar, whispered, "you are either a very dull, or a very modest man!" and sighing, began to repeat her lesson.

Whilst he bent his head over the sheet which he was correcting, she suddenly exclaimed, "Bless me, Mr. Constantine, what have you been doing? I hope you don't read in bed! The top of your hair is burnt to a cinder! Why, you look much

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more like having been in a fire, than Miss Beaufort does."

Thaddeus put his hand to his head.

"I did not know that I had carried away any more marks of a fire, in which I really was last night, than scorched clothes."

"A fire," interrupted Miss Beaufort, closing her book, "was it not near Tottenham-court-road?"

"It was, Madam," "answered he, in a tone almost as surprised as her own.

"Good gracious!" cried Euphemia, exerting her little voice, that she might be heard, before Miss Beaufort could have time to reply, "then I vow, you are the gentleman, who Miss Beaufort said, ran into the burning house, and, covered with flames, saved two children from perishing!"

"Am I so happy as to meet the lady," replied he, turning with an animated air to Miss Beaufort; "in you, Madam,

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Madam, who so humanely assisted the poor sufferers, and received the child from my arms?"

"It was, indeed, myself, Mr. Constantine," returned she, a tear swimming over her eye, which in a moment gave the cue to the tender Euphemia. She drew out her handkerchief; and, whilst her pretty cheeks overflowed, and her sweet voice was rendered sweeter, by an emotion, raised by ten thousand delightful fancies, she took hold of Miss Beaufort's hand.

"O! my lovely friend, wonder not that I esteem this brave Constantine, far beyond his present station!"

Thaddeus drew back. Miss Beaufort looked amazed; but Euphemia had mounted her romantic Pegasus, and the scene was too sentimental to close.

"Come here, Mr. Constantine," cried she, extending her other hand to him. Wondering where this folly would terminate, he gave it to her; when, in-

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stantly joining it with that of Miss Beaufort, she pressed them close together, and said, "Sweet Mary! Heroic Constantine! I thus elect you the two dearest friends of my heart. So charmingly associated in the delightful task of compassion, you shall ever be comingled in my faithful bosom!"

Then putting her handkerchief to her eyes, she walked out of the room, leaving Miss Beaufort and the Count, confused and confounded, by the side of each other. Miss Beaufort, suspecting that some extravagant passion subsisted between Euphemia and her young tutor, declined speaking first. Thaddeus, fixing his gaze on her downcast and revolving countenance, perceived nothing like offended pride at his undesigned presumption. He saw that she was only embarrassed; and, after a minute's hesitation, said,—

"I hope that Miss Beaufort is sufficiently acquainted with the romance of Miss

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Miss Euphemia's character, to pardon the action, unintentional on my part, of having touched her hand? I declare I had no expectation of Miss Euphemia's design."

"Do not make any apology to me, Mr. Constantine," returned she, resuming her seat, whence she had arisen on the abrupt departure of Euphemia; "To be sure, I was a little electrified, by the strange situation, in which the vivid feelings of Miss Euphemia have just made us actors. But I shall not forego my claim on a share of what she promised—your acquaintance?"

Thaddeus expressed his high sense of her condescension.

"I am not fond of fine terms," continued she, smiling; "but I know, that time and merit must purchase esteem. I can engage for the first, as I am to remain in town at least three months; but for the last, I fear, that I shall never have the opportunity of giving such an

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earnest of my deserving, as you did last night of your's."

Footsteps sounded on the stairs. Thaddeus took up his hat, and bowing, replied to her compliment, with such a modest, yet noble grace, that she gazed after him with wonder and concern. Before he closed the door he again bowed. Pleased with the transient look of pleasure, which at parting, beamed from his eyes,—through whose ingenuous mirrors, every thought of his soul might be read—she smiled a second adieu; and as he disappeared, left the room by another passage.

CHAP.

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CHAP. II.

When the Count appeared the succeeding day in Harley-street, Miss Beaufort introduced him to Mrs. Dorothy Somerset, as the gentleman who had so gallantly preserved the lives of the children at the hazard of his own.

Notwithstanding the lofty tossings of Miss Dundas's head, the good old maid paid him several encomiums on his intrepidity; and telling him, that the sufferers were the wife and family of a poor tradesman, who was gone into the country, she added, "But we saw them comfortably lodged before we left them; and, all the time we staid, I could not help congratulating myself on the easy compliance of Mary with my whims. I hate to sleep at an inn; and to prevent it then, I had prevailed on Miss Beaufort to pursue our road to town even through

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the night. It was lucky that it happened so, for I am certain that Mary will not allow these poor creatures a long lament over the wreck of their little property."

"How charmingly charitable, my lovely friend!" cried Euphemia, "let us make a collection for this unfortunate woman and her babes. Pray, as a small tribute, take that from me!" she put five guineas into the hand of the blushing Mary.

The ineffable grace with which the confused Miss Beaufort laid the money on her aunt's knee, did not escape the observation of Thaddeus; neither did the animated approbation of his eye, pass unnoticed, by the amiable object of his attention.

When Lady Tinemouth was informed by the Count, of the addition to the Harley-street party, her ladyship declared her pleasure at the news; saying, that she had been well acquainted with Mrs.

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Mrs. Dorothy and her niece, for some time before Lady Somerset's death.

As the Countess paused, Thaddeus was on the point of expressing his concern that Pembroke had lost his highly-prized mother; but recollecting that Lady Tinemouth was ignorant of their knowing each other, he allowed her to proceed without a remark.

"I never have been in company with her ladyship's son," continued the Countess; "it was during his absence on the Continent, that I was introduced to Lady Somerset. She was a woman, who possessed the rare talent of conforming herself to all descriptions of people; and whilst the complacency of her attentions surpassed the most refined flattery, she commanded the highest veneration for herself. Hence you may credit my satisfaction in this acquaintance; which, it is probable, would never have taken place, had I been the happy Countess of Tinemouth, instead of a deserted

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wife. Notwithstanding that the family of the Somersets were related to my lord, they had long treated him with coldness; and doubly disgusted at his late flagrant behaviour, they commenced a friendship with me, I believe, to demonstrate more fully their detestation of him. Indeed my husband is a creature of inconsistency. No man possessed more power to attract friends, than lord Tinemouth; and no man possessed less power to retain them; as fast as he made one, he offended the other; and, through these means, he has at this time, deprived himself of every individual out of his own house, who would not regard his death as a fortunate circumstance."

"But, Lady Somerset," cried Thaddeus, impatient to change a subject, every word of which went like a dagger to his heart, "I mean Miss. Dorothy Somerset, Miss Beaufort—"

"Yes," returned her ladyship; "I see, kind

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kind Mr. Constantine, your friendly solicitude to disengage me from retrospections so painful! Well then, I knew, and very much esteemed, the two ladies you mention; but the death of Lady Somerset, and their consequent residence in the country, have prevented a renewal of this pleasure. However, as they are now in town, I will thank you, to acquaint them with my intention to call upon them in Harley-street. I remember thinking Miss Beaufort a very charming girl."

Thaddeus thought so too: he saw that she was beautiful; he had witnessed instances of her goodness; and the recollection filled his mind with a complacency, which was quickly disturbed by the entrance of Miss Egerton, and Lady Sara Roos.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Constantine;" cried the lively Maria, shaking hands with him, "you are the very man whom I have been plotting against."

Lady

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Lady Tinemouth was uneasy at the care with which Lady Sara averted her face; well knowing that it was to conceal the powerful agitation of her features, which always took place at the sight of Thaddeus.

"Well, what is your plot, Miss Egerton?" inquired he, "I shall consider myself honoured by your commands, and do not require a conspiracy to entrap my obedience."

"That's a good boy! Then I have only to apply to you, Lady Tinemouth. Your ladyship must know," cried she, "that as Lady Sara and I were a moment ago driving up the hay-market, I nodded to Mr. Coleman, who was coming out of the Play-house. When he stopped, I pulled the check-string, and we had a great deal of con-fab out of the window. He tells me, that a new farce is to come out this day week; and he hoped that I would be there! No, says I, I cannot; for I am on a visit with that

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that precise woman the Countess of Tinemouth, who would not, to save you and all your generation, come into such a mob. Her ladyship shall have my box, cried he, for I would not for the world lose the honour of your opinion on the merits of my farce. To be sure not! cries I, so I accepted his box, and drove off, plotting with Lady Sara, how to get your ladyship as a chaprone, and Mr. Constantine for our beau. He has promised; so, dear Lady Tinemouth, don't be inflexible!"

Thaddeus was confounded at the dilemma into which his ready acquiescence had envolved his prudence. The Countess shook her head.

"Now, I declare, Lady Tinemouth," exclaimed Miss Egerton, this is an absolute stingy fit! You are afraid of your purse! You know that this private box precludes all awkward meetings, and you can have no excuse."

"But it cannot preclude all awkward sights;"

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sights;" answered her ladyship. "You know, Maria, that I never go into public, for fear of being shocked by the angry looks of my lord or son."

"Plague them both!" cried Miss Egerton, pettishly, "I wish the Lord would take your lord and son out of the world altogether!"

"Maria!" retorted her ladyship, with a grave air.

"Rebuke me, Lady Tinemouth if you like; I confess I am no Serena; and these trials of temper don't agree with my constitution. There," cried she, throwing a silver medal on the table, and laughing in spite of herself, "there is our free entrance; but I will send it back, and so break poor Coleman's heart."

"Fie, Maria;" answered her ladyship, patting her half-angry cheek, "would you owe to your petulence, what was denied to your good humour?"

"Then your ladyship will go!" exclaimed

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claimed she, exultingly, " you have yielded to my good humour; these sullens were a part of my stratagem. I won't let you recede."

The idea struck Lady Tinemouth, that this would be a proper opportunity to shew one of the Theatres to her young friend, without involving him in expense or obligation; and accordingly she ratified her consent.

" Do you intend to favour us with your company, Lady Sara?" asked the Countess, with a hope that she would refuse.

Lady Sara, who had been standing during the debate, silently at the window, rather proudly answered—

" Yes, Madam, if you will honour me with your protection."

Lady Tinemouth was the only one present, who understood the resentment which these words conveyed; and, almost believing that she had insulted her, by implying suspicion, she approached her ladyship,

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ladyship, with a pleading anxiety of countenance; "Then, Lady Sara, perhaps you will dine with me?" said she, "I mean to call on Mrs. Dorothy Somerset, and invite her to be of the party."

Lady Sara curtsied her acceptance of the invitation, and smiling, appeared to think no more of the matter. But she neither forgot it, nor found herself able to forgive Lady Tinemouth, for betraying her into a confidence, which her own turbulent passions made too easy of access. She had listened unwillingly to the reasonable declaration of the Countess, that her only way to retreat from an error, which threatened criminality, was to avoid the object.

"When a married woman," observed her ladyship, "is so unhappy as to love any man beside her husband, her only safety rests in the resolution to quit his society, and to banish his image whenever it obtrudes."

Lady

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Lady Sara, believing herself incapable of this exertion, hated the woman who thought it expedient. Lady Tinemouth, by letter and conversation, tried to display, in every possible light, the enormity of giving encouragement to such an attachment; and ended with urging the consideration of her duty to Heaven.

Of this argument Lady Sara knew little. She never reflected on the nature of her Creator, though she sometimes went to church, repeated the prayers, without being conscious of their spirit; and, when the coughing, sneezing, and blowing of noses, which commonly accompany the text, subsided, she generally called up the remembrance of the last ball, or an anticipation of the next assembly, to amuse herself until the prosing business was over. From church she drove to the park, where, bowling round the ring; or sauntering in the gardens; she soon forgot, that there existed, in the universe, a Power of higher consequence to please, than

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than her own vanity,—and the admiration of the spectators.

Lady Sara would have shuddered at hearing any one declare himself a deist, much more an atheist; but for any influence, which her nominal belief held over her desires, she might as well have been either. She never committed an action deserving the name of premeditated injury: nor went far out of her way, to do her best friend a service; not because she wanted inclination, but she ceased to remember, both the petitioner, and his petition, before he had been five minutes from her sight. She had read as much, as most fine ladies have read: a few histories, a few volumes of essays, a few novels, and now and then a little poetry, comprised the whole range of her studies; these, with morning calls, and evening assemblies, filled up the whole of her day. Such had been the routine of her life, until she met the Count Sobieski at Lady Tinemouth's; which event,

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event, caused a total revolution in her mind and conduct.

The strength of Lady Sara's understanding, might have credited a better education; but her passions, bearing an equal power with this vigour, and having taken a wrong direction, she neither acknowledged the will, nor the capability, to hold the empire of her reason. When Love entered her heart, his first conquest was her vanity; she surrendered all her admirers, in the hope, of securing the admiration of Thaddeus: his second victory, made him master of her discretion; she revealed her unhappy affection to Lady Tinemouth, and more than hinted it to himself. What had she else to lose? she believed her honor to be safer than her life. *Her honour* was the term. She had no conception, or, at best, a faint one, that a breach of the marriage vow, could be an outrage on the laws of Heaven. The word *Sin* has been gradually banished the oligarchy of fashion, from the

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the hour in which Charles the Second, and his profligate court, trod down piety along with hypocrisy—to this day, when the new philosophy, having accomplished in total outlawry, denounced it a rebel to decency, and the freedom of man.

Thus the Christian religion, being driven from the haunts of the great, pagan morality is raised from that prostration, where, Dagon-like, it fell at the feet of the Scriptures,—and is again erected as the idol of adoration. Guilt against Heaven, fades before the decrees of man; his law of ethics, reprobates *crime*; but crime is only a temporary transgression, in opposition to the general good; it draws no consequent punishment, heavier than the anger of the offended parties. Morality neither promises rewards after death, nor chastisement for error. The disciples of this independent doctrine, hold forth instances of the *perfectibility of human actions*, produced by the unassisted

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unassisted decisions of human intellect on the limits of right and wrong. They admire virtue, because it is beautiful. They practise it, because it is heroic. They do not abstain from the gratification of an intemperate wish, under a belief that it is sinful, but in obedience to their reason, which rejects the commission of a vicious act, because it is uncomely. In the first case, God is their judge; in the latter, themselves. The comparison need only be proposed, to humble the pride, that made it necessary. How do these systemisers, refine and subtilize? How do they dwell on the principle of virtue, and turn it in every metaphysical light, until their philosophy rarifies it to nothing! Some degrade, and others abandon, the only basis, on which an upright character can stand with firmness. The bulwark, which Revelation erected between the passions and the soul, is levelled first; and then, that *instinctive rule of right*, which the modern

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modern casuist nominates the citadel of virtue, falls of course.

By such gradations, is the progress of depravity accomplished; and the general leaven having worked to Lady Sara's mind, on such premises, did she, (though she might not arrange them so distinctly,) deduce, that what she called preserving her honour, was a mere establishment of man; and might be extended, or limited by him, to any length he liked. For instance, the Turks were not content with one wife, but appropriated hundreds to their possession; and, because such an enlargement was permitted by Mahammed, no other nation presumed to call them culpable.

Hence she thought, that if she could once reconcile herself to believe, that her own happiness was dearer to her than the notice of half a thousand people, to whom she was indifferent; that only in their opinion and the world's, her flying to the protection of Thaddeus would be a crime;

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a crime; could she confidently think this, what should deter her from instantly throwing herself into the arms of the man she loved?

"Ah!" cried she one night, as she traversed her chamber in a paroxism of tears, "what are the vows I have sworn? How can I keep them? I have sworn to love, to honour Captain Roos; but, in spite of myself, without any action of my own, I have broken both these oaths. I cannot love him; I hate him; and I cannot honour the man I hate. What have I else to break? Nothing. My nuptial vow is as completely annihilated, as if I had left him never to return.—How?" cried she, after a pause of some minutes, "how shall I know what passes in the mind of Constantine? Did he love me, would he protect me, I would brave the whole universe; oh, I should be the happiest of the happy!"

Fatal conclusion of reflection! It infected her dreaming and her waking fancy.

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fancy. She regarded every thing as an enemy that opposed her passion; and, as the first of these enemies, she detested Lady Tinemouth. The Countess's last admonishing letter, enraged her by its arguments; and throwing it into the fire, with execrations and tears, she determined to pursue her own will, but to affect being influenced by her ladyship's counsels.

The Count Sobieski, who surmised not the hundredth part of the love which Lady Sara bore towards him, began to hope, that her ardent manner had misled him; or that she had seen the danger of such imprudence.

Under these impressions, the party for the theatre was settled; and Thaddeus, after sitting an hour in Grosvenor Place, returned to his humble home, and attendance on his friend.

CHAP.

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CHAP. III.

THE addition of Mrs. Dorothy Somerset and Miss Beaufort, to the morning groupe at Lady Dundas's, imparted a less reluctant motion to the before tardy feet of the Count, whenever he turned them towards Harley-street.

Mrs. Dorothy readily supposed him to have been better born than he appeared; and, displeased with the treatment he received from Miss Dundas and her guests, behaved to him herself, with the most gratifying politeness.

Aunt Dorothy, (for that was the title, by which every branch of the Baronet's family addressed her,) was full twenty years the senior of her brother, Sir Robert Somerset. Having in her youth been thought very like the famous and lovely Mrs. Woffington, she was considered the beauty of her time; and, as

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such, for ten years, continued the reigning toast. Nevertheless, she arrived at the age of sixty-five without having been either the object, or the subject, of a fervent passion.

Possessing a fine understanding, a fine taste, and fine feelings, she had, by some chance, escaped love. It cannot be denied, that she was much admired, much respected, and much esteemed; and that she received two or three splendid proposals from men, whom she had animated thus far. Some of these men she admired some she respected, and some she esteemed, but not one did she love; and she successively refused them all. Shortly after their discharge, they generally consoled themselves by marrying other women, who, perhaps, wanted both the charms and the sense of Miss Somerset; yet she congratulated them on their choice, and usually became the warm friend of the happy couple.

Thus, year passed over year; Miss Somerset

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merset continued the esteemed of every worthy heart, though she could not kindle the embers of a livelier glow, in any one of them; and, at the age of sixty-five, she found herself an old maid; but possessing as much good humour, and affection towards the young people about her, as if she owned half a dozen of her own offspring, to mingle in the circle.

This amiable old lady, usually took her netting into the library beside the fair students; and, whenever Thaddeus entered the room, (so natural is it for generous natures to sympathise,) his eyes first sought her venerable figure; then, glancing round, to catch an assuring beam from the heavenly countenance of the lovely Mary, he seated himself with confidence.

The presence of these ladies, operated, as a more than sufficient antidote, to the disagreeables of his situation. To them he directed all the attention, that was not required by his occupation; he heard

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only them speak, when a hundred others were talking; he saw only them, when a hundred others were in company.

In addition to this pleasant change, Miss Euphemia's passion, assumed a form, less capable of tormenting. She had been reading Madame D'Arblay's Camilla; and becoming enamoured of the delicacy and pensive silence of the interesting heroine, she determined on adopting the same character; and, at the same time, taking it into her ever creative brain, that Constantine's coldness, bore a strict affinity to the caution of Edgar Mandelbert; without further debate, she wiped the rouge off her face, and prepared to '*let concealment, like a worm in the bud, feed on her damask cheek.*'

To afford decorous support to this fancy, her gayest clothes were thrown aside, to make way for a negligence of apparel, which cost her two hours each morning to compose. Her dimpling smiles were now quite banished. She

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was ever sighing, and ever silent, and ever lolling and leaning about; or reclining along the sofa, in some pretty disconsolate attitude, just selected from a folio of prints, in which she daily studied her dress and movements.

Thaddeus preferred this pathetic whim, before her former lover-like advances; it afforded him quiet, and relieved him from much embarrassment.

Every succeeding visit induced Miss Beaufort to observe him with nicer accuracy, and a more lively interest. The nobleness, yet humility, with which he behaved towards herself and her aunt; and the manly serenity with which he suffered the insulting sarcasms of Miss Dundas, led her not merely to conceive, but to entertain, many doubts, that his present situation was far below his birth.

The ladies who dropped in now and then on the sisters, were not backward in espousing the game of ridicule, as it played away a few minutes to join in a

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laugh with the *witty Diana.* These gracious beings, from their sex, knew they were privileged to offend; but it was not always that the gentlemen durst venture beyond a shrug of the shoulder, a drop of the lip, a wink of the eye, or a raising of the brows. However, Mary observed with contempt, that they were prudent enough to exercise these specimens of hostility, only when the Count had turned his back; and regarding him with increased admiration, she was indignant, and then disdainful, at the motives of envy, which actuated these men to insult him under the mask of indifference.

The occasional calls of Lady Tinemouth and Miss Egerton, stimulated the cabal against Thaddeus. The sincere sentiment of equality with themselves, which these two ladies evinced by their behaviour to him; and the same conduct being adopted by Mrs. Dorothy and her beautiful niece, besides the evident partiality of Euphemia, altogether inflamed

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the spleen of Miss Dundas's *coterie* to absolute rudeness.

This little phalanx, at the head of which was the superb Diana, could offer no real reason for disliking a man, not only beneath them, but who had never offended them even by implication. It was a sufficient apology to their easy consciences, that "he gave himself such courtly airs as were quite ridiculous; that his presumption was astonishing. In short, they were all idle; and it was monstrous amusing to lounge a morning with the rich Dundas's and hoax monsieur."

Had Thaddeus known one fourth of the insolent derision, with which his misfortunes were treated behind his back, though he thought that the very breath which he breathed ought to be sacrificed, if conducive to the life of his friend, perhaps even his necessity, could not, in this case, have detained him in his employment. The brightness of a brave

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man's name makes shadows perceptible, which might pass unmarked over a duller surface. Sobieski's delicate honour would have supposed itself sullied by enduring such contumely with toleration. But, as was said before, the male adjuncts of Miss Dundas received such a prompt warning, from an accidental knitting of the Count's brow, that they never could muster temerity to sport their wit to his face.

These circumstances were not lost upon Mary; she collected them as part of a treasure, and turned them over on her pillow with the jealous examination of a miser. Like Euphemia, she supposed Thaddeus to be other than he seemed; yet her fancy did not gift him with the blood of the Bourbons; she merely believed him to be a gentleman; and, from the maternal manner of Lady Tinemouth towards him, suspected that her ladyship knew more of his history than she chose to reveal.

Things

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Things were in this state, when the Countess requested that Mrs. Dorothy would trust her niece, the ensuing evening, with herself and a little party to the Haymarket Theatre. The good lady having consented, Miss Beaufort received the permission with pleasure; and, as she was invited to sup with her ladyship, she formed the hope that something might fall from the Countess or Miss Egerton, which would throw a light on the true situation of Mr. Constantine.

From infancy Miss Beaufort had loved with enthusiasm all kinds of excellence. Indeed, she esteemed no person warmly, whom she did not think eminent in the liberal qualities over the rest of mankind. She sought for something to respect in every character; and when, by chance, she found any thing to admire, her susceptible soul blazed, and, by its own pure flame, lit her to a closer inspection into the object for whom she was interested.

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When Lady Somerset collected all the virtue and talent in the country around her table, they were not brought there on a vain errand. From them, Miss Beaufort gathered her best lessons in morality and taste, and from them her earliest perceptions of friendship. Mary was the beloved pupil, and respected friend, of the brightest characters in England; and though they were men, some of whom had not passed the age of forty, she never had been in love, nor had she mistaken the nature of her esteem so far, as to call it by that name. Hence, she was neither afraid nor ashamed to acknowledge a correspondence, which she knew to be her highest distinction. But, had the frank and innocent Mary exhibited half the like attentions, which she paid to these men in one hour, to the common class of young men through the course of a month, they would have declared, "that the poor girl was over-head in love with them; and have pitied (what they

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they justly denominate) her folly." Foolish must that woman be, who will sacrifice the most precious gift in her possession, to the superficial graces, or empty blandishments, of a self-idolized coxcomb.

Such a being was not Mary Beaufort; and on these principles, she contemplated the extraordinary merits of the exiled Thaddeus, with an interest honourable to her penetration and heart.

When Miss Egerton called in Lady Sara Roos's carriage, to take her to the Hay-market, Mary was not displeased at seeing Mr. Constantine step out of the coach to hand her in. During their drive, Miss Egerton informed her, that, from Lady Tinemouth's sudden indisposition, Lady Sara had kindly undertaken to be their chaprone; and had promised to bring them all back to sup in Grosvenor Place.

Lady Sara never had seen Mary, though she frequently had heard of her beauty

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beauty and vast fortune: this last qualification, her ladyship hoped, might have given an unmerited *eclat* to the first; therefore, when she saw, in the person of Miss Beaufort, the most beautiful creature she ever had beheld, nothing could equal her surprise and vexation.

The happy lustre that beamed in the fine eyes of Mary, shone like a vivifying influence around her; a bright glow animated her cheek; whilst a pleasure, for which she did not seek to account, bounded at her heart, and modulated every tone of her voice to sweetness and enchantment.

"Syren!" thought Lady Sara, withdrawing her large dark eyes from her face, and turning them, full of dissolving languor, upon Thaddeus, "here are all thy charms directed!" then drawing a sigh, so deep that it made her neighbour start, she fixed her eyes on her fan, and

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and never looked up until they reached the playhouse.

The curtain was raised as the little party seated themselves in the box.

"Can any body tell me what the play is?" asked Lady Sara.

"I never thought of inquiring," replied Maria.

"I looked in the paper this morning," said Miss Beaufort, "and I think it is called *Sighs*, a translation from a Drama of Kotzebue's."

"A strange title!" was the general observation, when Mr. Suett, who personated one of the characters, beginning to speak, their attention was summoned to the stage.

On the entrance of Mr. Charles Kemble, in the character of Adelbert, the Count unconsciously turned pale. He perceived, by the dress of the actor, that he was intended to personate a Pole; and, alarmed at the probability of seeing something to recal recollections, which

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which he strove to banish, his agitation did not allow him to hear any thing that passed.

Miss Egerton was not so tardy in the use of her eyes and ears; but stretching out her hand to the back of the box, where Thaddeus was standing by Lady Sara's chair, she caught hold of his sleeve.

"There, Constantine!" cried she, "look at Adelbert! Now, that is exactly the figure *you* cut in your Polish trumpery two months ago."

The Count bowed with a forced smile, and, glancing at the stage, replied—

"Then, for the first time in my life, I regret having followed a lady's advice; I think I must have lost by the change."

"Yes," rejoined she, "you have lost much fur and much embroidery; but you now look much more like a christian."

The substance of these speeches was not lost on Mary, who continued to mark,

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mark, with redoubling interest, the changes which his countenance underwent along with the scene. As she sat forward, by a slight turn of her head she could discern the smallest fluctuation of the Count's features; and they were not a few; for, placing himself at the back of Lady Sara's chair, he leaned over, with his soul set in his eye, watching every motion of Mr. Charles Kemble.

Mary knew that Constantine was a Polander; and the surmise which she entertained of his being unfortunate, received full corroboration at the scene, wherein Adelbert is grossly insulted by the rich merchant. During the whole of it, she scarcely dared trust her eyes towards his flushed and agitated face.

The interview between Adelbert and Leopold commenced. When the former was describing his country's miseries with his own, Thaddeus, unable to bear it longer, unobserved by any but Mary, drew

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drew back into the box. In a moment or two, Mr. Charles Kemble made the following reply to an observation of Leopold's, that "poverty is no dishonour."

"Certainly none to me! To Poland, to my struggling country, I sacrificed my wealth as I would have sacrificed my life, if she had required it. My country is no more; and we are wanderers on a burthened earth, finding no refuge but in the hearts of the humane and virtuous."

The passion and force of these words could not fail of reaching the ears of Thaddeus. Mary's attention followed them to their object, by the heaving of whose breast she plainly discovered the anguish of their effect. Her heart fluttered. How willingly would she have approached him, and said something of sympathy, of consolation! but she durst not; and she turned away her tearful

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tearful eye, and looked again on the stage.

Lady Sara now stood up: hanging over Mary's chair, listened with congenial emotions to the scene between Adelbert and the innocent Rose. Lady Sara felt it all in her own bosom; and, looking round, to catch what was passing in the Count's mind, she beheld him leaning against a corner of the box with his head inclined to the curtain of the door.

"Mr. Constantine!" almost unconsciously escaped her lips. He started, and discovered, by the humidity of his eyes, why he had withdrawn. Her ladyship's tears were gliding down her cheeks. Miss Egerton, greatly amazed at the oddness of the scene, turned to Miss Beaufort, who a moment before having caught a glimpse of the distressed countenance of the Count, could only smile, and bow her head to Maria's observation.

Who

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Who is there that can enter into the secret folds of the heart, and know all its miseries? Who participate in that joy, which dissolves and rarifies man to the essence of heaven? Soul must mingle with soul, and the ethereal voice of the spirit must speak, before these can be comprehended.

Mary, ready to suffocate with the emotion which she repelled from her eyes, gladly affected to be absorbed in the business of the stage, (not one object of which she now saw,) and with breathless attention, lost not one soft whisper, which Lady Sara poured into the ear of Thaddeus.

"Why?" asked her ladyship, in a tremulous and low tone. "Why should we seek ideal sorrows, when those of our own hearts are beyond alleviation? Happy Rose!" sighed her ladyship, "Constantine," continued she, "do not you think that Adelbert is consoled at least,

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least, by the affection of that lovely woman?"

Like Miss Beaufort, Constantine had hitherto replied with bows only.

"Come," added Lady Sara, laying her soft hand on his arm, and regarding him with a look of tenderness so unequivocal, that he cast his eyes to the ground, although its compassion and sympathy touched his heart; "Come," repeated she, animated by the faint colour which tinged his cheek, "you know that I have the care of this party; and I must not allow our only beau to be melancholy."

"I beg your pardon, Lady Sara," returned he,—in gratitude to her kind commiseration, pressing the hand that yet rested on his arm, "I am not very well. I wish that I had not seen this play!"

Lady Sara sunk into the seat from which she had arisen. He had never before taken her hand, except when assisting

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sisting her to her carriage; this pressure, shook her very soul, and awakened hopes, which rendered her for a moment incapable of sustaining herself, or venturing a reply.

There was something in the tones of Lady Sara's voice, and in her manner, far more expressive than her words: mutual sighs, which breathed from her ladyship's bosom, and that of Thaddeus, as they sat down, made a cold shiver run from the head to the foot of Miss Beaufort. Mary's surprise at the meaning of this emotion, caused a second tremor, and with a palpitating heart, she asked herself a few questions.

Could this interesting young man, whom every person of sense appeared to esteem and respect, could he sully his virtues, by participating in a passion with a married woman? No; it was impossible.

Notwithstanding this decision, she determined to observe him narrowly: and

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be well convinced of his worth, before she permitted him to augment the share of regard, which he already possessed in her bosom.

With her head full of these reflections, she awaited the farce, without observing when it appeared. Indeed, none present knew any thing about this piece, (to see which they had professedly come to the theatre,) excepting Miss Egerton; whose ever merry spirits, had enjoyed the humour of *Totum* in the play, and now laughed heartily, though unaccompanied, through the ridiculous whims of the farce.

Nothing that passed, could totally disengage the mind of the Count from those remembrances, which the recent drama had aroused. When the melting voice of Lady Sara, in whispers, tried to recal his attention; by a start only, he evinced his recollection of not being alone. Convinced, however, of the kindness of her motive, he exerted himself;

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self; and, by the time that the curtain dropt, he had so far rallied his spirits, as to be able to attend to the civility of seeing the ladies safe out of the theatre.

Miss Egerton, laughing, as he assisted her into the carriage, said, "I verily believe, Mr. Constantine, had I glanced round during the play, I should have seen as pretty a lacrymal scene between you and Lady Sara, as any on the stage. I won't have this flurting! I declare I will tell Captain Roos ——"

She continued talking; but turning about to offer his service to Miss Beaufort, he heard no more.

Miss Beaufort felt strangely; she felt cold and reserved; and, undesignedly, she appeared what she felt. There was a grave dignity in her air, accompanied with a collectedness and stillness in her before animated countenance, which astonished and chilled Thaddeus, though she bowed her head, and gave him her hand to put her into the coach.

In

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In their way home, Miss Egerton ran over the merits of the play and farce; rallied Thaddeus on the "*tall Pole,*" which she threatened should be his epithet whenever he offended her; and then flying from subject to subject, talked herself and her hearers so weary, that they mutually rejoiced when the carriage stopped in Grosvenor-place.

After they had severally paid their respects to Lady Tinemouth, who, being indisposed, was lying along the sofa, she desired Thaddeus to draw a chair near to her.

"I want to learn," said she, "what you think of our English theatre?"

"Prithee, don't ask him!" cried Miss Egerton, pouring out a glass of wine, "we have seen a tremendous brother Pole of his, who I believe has '*hopped off*' with all his spirits! Why, he has been looking as rueful as a half-drowned man, all the night; and for Lady Sara,—and, I could swear, Miss Beaufort,

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fort, too, they have been two Niobe's, '*all tears.*' So, good folks, I must drink better health to you, to save myself from the vapours."

"What is all this, Mr. Constantine?" asked the Countess, addressing Thaddeus, whose eyes were now fixed with grateful surprise on the blushing, though displeased face of Miss Beaufort."

"My weakness;" replied he, sighing and turning to her ladyship: "the play relates to a native of Poland; one, who, like myself, an exile in a strange land, is subjected to sufferings and contumelies, which the bravest spirits may find hard to bear. Any man may combat misery; but even the most intrepid will shrink from insult. This, I believe, is the sum of the story. Its resemblance, in some points, to my own, affected me; and," added he, looking gratefully at Lady Sara, and timidly towards Miss Beaufort; "if these ladies have sympathized

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sympathized with emotions, against which I strove, but could not entirely conceal, I owe to it, the sweetest consolation, that is now in the power of fate to bestow!"

"Poor Constantine!" cried Maria Egerton, patting his head with one hand, whilst with the other she wiped a tear from her always smiling eye, "forgive me, if I have hurt you. I like you vastly, though I must now and then laugh at you; you know I hate dismals; so let this tune enliven us all!" and, flying to her piano, she played and sung two or three merry airs, till the Countess commanded her to the supper-table.

At this most sociable repast of the whole day, cheerfulness seemed again to disperse the gloom, which threatened the circle. Thaddeus set the example. His unrestrained and elegant conversation, acquired new pathos, from the anguish, that was driven back to

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his heart; like the beds of water, which infuse their own nature with the current, his hidden grief imparted an undescribable interest and charm, to all his sentiments and actions.

Mary now beheld him in his real character. Unmolested by the haughty presence of Miss Dundas, he became unreserved, intelligent, and enchanting. He was master of every subject; and discoursed on all with a grace, which corroborated her *waking visions*, that he was, as some *archangel ruined.*

With the increase of Miss Beaufort's admiration of the Count's fine talents, she gradually lost the recollection, of what had occupied her mind, relative to Lady Sara; and her own beautiful countenance, dilating into confidence and delight, the evening passed away with pleasure, until the little party separated for their several homes.

Lady Tinemouth and Maria were fascinated by the lovely Miss Beaufort.

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Miss Beaufort was equally pleased with the Countess and her friend; but when she thought on Thaddeus, she was surprised, interested, charmed.

Lady Sara Roos's reflections, were not less flattering: she dwelt with redoubled passion, on that look from the Count's eyes, that touch of his hand, which she thought were signs of a reciprocal flame. Both actions were forgotten by him the moment after they were committed; yet he was not ungrateful; but whilst he acknowledged her attentions, and assented to the loveliness of her form, he saw that she would lead him to the brink of a precipice, where, if he fell, he must sink to a depth, never to rise again.

He sought a refuge from such dangerous meditation, in the idea of the ingenuous Mary, on whose modest countenance Virtue seemed to have '*set her seal.*' Whilst recollecting the pitying

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kindness of her voice and looks, his heart owned the empire of purity; and, in the contemplation of her unaffected excellence, he soon forgot the witcheries of Lady Sara, and her love.

CHAP.

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CHAP. IV.

NEXT morning, when Thaddeus, according to custom, approached the General's bed to give him his coffee, he found him feverish, and his intellects more than usually unsettled.

The Count awaited with anxiety the arrival of the benevolent Cavendish, whom he expected; and when he appeared, he declared his increased alarm. Dr. Cavendish having felt the patient's pulse, expressed a wish that he could be induced to take a little exercise. Thaddeus had often urged this necessity to his friend; and having met with constant refusals, he hopelessly repeated the entreaty now; when, to his surprise and satisfaction, the old man instantly consented.

Having seen him comfortably dressed, (for the Count attended to these *minutiæ*

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with the care of a son) the doctor said, that they must ride with him to Hyde Park, where he would put them out to walk, until he had performed a visit to a sick person in Piccadilly, after which, he would return, and take them home.

The General not only expressed pleasure at the drive, but, as the air was warm and balmy, (it being about the beginning of June,) made no objection to the proposed walk.

He admired the Park, the Serpentine River, the cottage on its bank, and seemed highly diverted by the horsemen and carriages in the ring. The pertinency of his remarks, afforded Thaddeus a ray of hope, that his senses had not entirely lost their union with reason; and he was contemplating, with awakened confidence, what might be the happy effects of constant exercise, when the General's complaints of weariness, obliged him to stop near Piccadilly

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dilly gate, and await the arrival of the doctor's coach.

He was standing against the railing, supporting Butzou; and, with his hat in his hand, was shading his friend's face from the sun, when two or three carriages driving in, he met the eyes of Miss Euphemia Dundas; who, pulling the check-string, exclaimed, "Bless me, Mr. Constantine! Who expected to see you here? Why your note told us, that you were confined with a sick friend."

Thaddeus bowed to her, and still sustaining the debilitated frame of the General on his arm, advanced to the side of the coach. Miss Beaufort, who now looked out, expressed her hope that his invalid was better.

"This is the friend I mentioned," said the Count, turning his eyes on the mild features of Butzou; "his physician having ordered him to walk, I accompanied him hither."

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"Dear me! how ill you look, Sir," cried Euphemia, addressing the poor invalid; "but you are attended by a kind friend."

"My dear lord!" exclaimed the old man, not regarding what she said, "I must go home; I am tired; pray call the carriage."

Euphemia was again opening her mouth to speak, but Miss Beaufort, perceiving a look of distress in the expressive features of Mr. Constantine, interrupted her by saying, "Good morning, Mr. Constantine; I know that we detain you, and oppress that gentleman, whose pardon we ought to beg." She bowed her head to the General; whose white hairs, were blowing about his face, as he attempted to pull the Count towards the pathway.

"My friend cannot thank you, kind Miss Beaufort," cried Thaddeus with a look of gratitude, that made her blush, "but I do from my heart!"

"Here

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"Here it is! Pray, my lord, come along!" cried Batzou: Thaddeus, seeing that his information was right, bowed to the ladies, and their carriage drove off.

Though the wheels of Lady Dundas's coach, rolled away from the retreating figures of Thaddeus and his friend, the images of both, occupied the meditations of Euphemia and Miss Beaufort, whilst *tête-à-tête*, and in silence, they made the circuit of the Park.

When the carriage again passed the spot on which the subject of their thoughts had stood, Mary, almost mechanically, looked out of the window towards the gate.

"Is he gone yet?" asked Euphemia, sighing deeply.

Mary drew in her head, with the quickness of conscious guilt; and, whilst a colour stained her face, which of itself might have betrayed her prevarication, she asked, "Who?"

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"Mr. Constantine," replied Euphemia with a second sigh. "Did you remark, Mary, how gracefully he supported that sick old gentleman? Was it not the personification of Youth upholding the fainting steps of Age? He put me in mind of the charming young prince, whose name I forget, leading the old Belisarius."

"You are an enthusiast, Euphemia!" returned Mary, striving to smile, and wondering within herself, what could be the meaning of the appellations, with which the old man had addressed Thaddeus.

"So all tell me," replied Euphemia; "so all say, who neither possess the sensibility nor the candour to allow, that great merit may exist without being associated with great rank. Yet," cried the little beauty, in a more animated tone, "I have my doubts, Mary, of his being what he seems. Did you observe

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serve the sick gentleman call him *my lord?*"

"I did," returned Mary, "and I was not surprised. Such manners as Mr. Constantine's, are not to be acquired in a cottage."

"Dear, dear Mary," cried Euphemia, flinging her ivory arms round her neck; "how I love you for these words! you are generous, you think nobly, and I will no longer hesitate to—to—" and breaking off, she hid her head in Miss Beaufort's bosom.

Mary's heart throbbed, her cheeks grew pale, and, almost unconsciously, she wished to stop the tide of Miss Dundas's confidence.

"Dear Euphemia," answered she, "your regard for this interesting exile is very praise-worthy. But beware of ——" she hesitated; a remorseful twitch in her own breast, stayed the warning that was rising to her tongue; and, blushing at a motive, which she could not

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not at the instant assign to friendship, selfishness, or envy, she touched the cheek of Euphemia with her quivering lips.

Euphemia had finished the sentence for her, and raising her head, exclaimed. —"What should I fear in esteeming Mr. Constantine? Is he not the most captivating creature in the world? And for his beauty! Oh, Mary, he is so beautiful, that when the library is filled with the handsomest men in town, the moment Constantine enters, their reign is over. I compare them with his god-like figure, and I feel as one looking at the sun; all other objects appear dim and shapeless."

"I hope," returned Mary, rubbing her forehead with her hand, her head beginning to ache strangely, "that Mr. Constantine does not owe your friendship, to his fine person? I think that his mental qualities are more deserving of such a gift."

"Don't

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"Don't look so severe, dear Mary!" cried Miss Dundas, observing that she cast down her eyes, with a contracting brow; "are you displeased with me?"

"Mary's displeasure was at the austerity of her own words, and not at her auditor. Raising her eyes with a smile, both in them, and on her lips, she said, "I do not mean, my dear girl, to be severe; but I would wish, for the honour of my sex, that the objects which attract either our love or our compassion should have something more precious than mere exterior beauty, to engage our interest."

"Well, I will soon be satisfied!" cried Euphemia, in a gayer tone, as they drove through Grosvenor-gate; "we all know that Constantine is sensible and accomplished: he writes poetry like an angel, both in French and Italian: I have hundreds of mottos composed by him; one of them, Mary, is on the work-box I gave

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gave you yesterday: and, what is more, I will ask him to-morrow, why that old gentleman called him *my lord?* If he be a lord!" exclaimed she.

"What then?" inquired the eloquent eyes of Mary.

"Don't look so impertinent, my dear, cried the now animated beauty," "I positively won't say another word to you to-day."

Miss Beaufort's head-ache became so painful, that she rejoiced when Euphemia ceased, and the carriage drew up to Lady Dundas's door.

A night of almost unremitted sleep, performed such good effects on the frame and intellects of general Butzou, that the ever-anxious Thaddeus, received with pleasure, the opinion of Doctor Cavendish, who thought that his patient was sufficiently better, to inspire him with hopes of the best consequences, from a constant repetition of air and exercise. Accordingly, after the ride and

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and walk had been repeated the following day, the Count left his friend to his maps and little Nanny, and once more took the way to Harley-street.

He found only Miss Dundas and her sister in the study. Mary (against her will, which she opposed because it was her will,) went out a shopping with Mrs. Dorothy, Somerset and Lady Dundas.

Miss Dundas left the room the moment she finished her lessons.

Euphemia, delighted at being *tête-à-tête* with Thaddeus, forgot that she was to act the fascinating character of Madame d'Arblay's heroine; and, shutting her book the instant Diana disappeared all at once opened her attack on his confidence.

To the eager questions, which the few words of the General had excited, the Count afforded no other reply, than the information, that his poor friend knew not what he said, having been a long time

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time in a state, of mental derangement.

This explanation caused a momentary mortification in the fanciful Euphemia; but, as it was a property of her mind to erect a new airy castle, immediately on the sinking of the old, she soon rallied, and embraced the supposition, that "he might be a Duke, which was more than a lord!" At any rate, let him be what he would, he charmed her, and had much ado to parry the increasing boldness of her speeches, without letting her see that they were understood.

"You are very diffident, Constantine;" cried she, looking down. "If I consider you worthy of my friendship, why should *you* make disqualifying assertions?"

"Every man, Madam," returned Thaddeus, bowing as he rose from his chair, "must be diffident of deserving the honour of your notice."

"There

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"There is no man living," replied she blushing, "to whom I would offer my friendship but yourself."

Thaddeus bit his lip; he knew not what to answer; bowing a second time, he stretched out his hand, and drew his hat towards him. Euphemia's eyes followed the movement.

"You are in a prodigious haste, Mr. Constantine!"

"I know I intrude, Madam; and I have promised to be with my sick friend at an early hour."

"Well, you may go, since you are obliged;" returned the pretty Euphemia, rising and smiling sweetly as she laid one hand on his arm, and put the other into her tucker: she drew out a little white leather *souvenir*; marked on the back, in gold letters, with the words '*Toujour cher*,' and slipping it into his hand, "There, receive that, Constantine; and retain it as the first pledge of Euphemia Dundas's friendship."

Thaddeus

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Thaddeus coloured as he took it; and again having recourse to the convenient reply of a bow, left the room, quite discomposed with vexation.

There was an indelicacy in this absolutely wooing conduct of Miss Euphemia, which, notwithstanding her beauty, and the softness that was its vehicle, struck him with the deepest disgust. He could not trace real affection either in her words or manner; and that any woman, instigated by a mere whim, should lay aside the decent reserves of her sex, and actually court his regard, surprised, whilst it impelled him to loathe her.

They who adopt Euphemia's sentiments are little aware of the conclusion which society infer from such intemperate behaviour. That mistaken creature, who, either at the impulse of her own disposition, or the mandates of example, is induced to despise the guard of modesty, literally '*forsakes the guide of*

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of her youth,' and leaves herself open to every attack which man can devise against her. By levelling the barrier raised by nature, she herself exposes the strong-hold of virtue; and may find, too late for recovery, that what modesty has abandoned, is not long held by honour.

Euphemia's affected attachment, suggested to the Count, a few unpleasant recollections respecting the fervent and unequivocal passion of Lady Sara. Though guilty, it sprung from a headlong ardour of disposition, which formed at once the error and its palliation. He saw that love was not welcomed by her, (at least he thought so,) as a play-thing, but struggled against, as with a foe; he had witnessed her tortures, he pitied them; and, to render her happy, would gladly have made any sacrifice short of his conscience. Too well assured of being all the world to Lady Sara; the belief that Miss Euphemia liked him only from

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from idleness, caprice, and contradiction, caused him to repay her overtures with decided contempt.

When he arrived at home, he threw the pocket-book, whose unambiguous motto made him laugh at her and himself, into a drawer; and looking round his humble room, whose wicker chairs, oil-clothed floor, and uncurtained windows, announced any thing but splendour: "Poor Euphemia!" thought he, "how would you be dismayed, were the indigent Constantine really to take you at your word, and bring you home to such a cheerless habitation!"

The repetition of the late scene, which was communicated to Miss Beaufort from Euphemia, failed in producing a similar effect on her.

Mary could discover no reason why the old gentleman's mental derangement should dignify his friend with titles he had never borne. She remarked that his answer to Euphemia was evasive; she remembered

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remembered his emotion and apology on seeing Mr. C. Kemble in *Adelbert*; and uniting with these facts, his manners and acquirements, so far beyond the charges of vulgar education, she could retain no doubt of his being at least well-born.

This mysterious Constantine, occupied her hourly thoughts during the space of two months; in which time, she had full opportunity to learn much of a character, with whom she associated almost every day. At Lady Tinemouth's, (one of whose evening guests she frequently became,) she beheld him disencumbered of that armour of reserve, which was his best repellent, in the rude attacks, which always met him in Harley-street.

At the house of the Countess, Mary saw him welcomed like an idolized being, before whose cheering influence all frowns and clouds must disappear. When he entered, the smile resumed its seat on the languid features of Lady Tinemouth;

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Tinemouth; Miss Egerton's eye lighted up to keener archness; Lady Sara's voluptuous orbs floated in pleasure; and for Mary herself, her breast heaved, her cheeks glowed, her hands trembled, a quick sigh escaped her bosom; and whilst she remained in his presence, she believed that happiness had lost its usual evanescent property, and had become tangible, to hold and press upon the heart.

Mary, who investigated the cause of these tremors on her pillow, bedewed it with delicious though bitter tears, when her alarmed soul whispered, that she nourished for this amiable foreigner, '*a something than friendship dearer.*'

"Ah! is it to come to this?" cried she, pressing down her saturated eye-lids with her hand, "am I at last to love a man, who perhaps never casts a thought on me? How despicable shall I become in my own eyes!"

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The pride of woman puts this charge to her taken heart: that heart, which seems tempered of the purest clay, and warmed with the fire of Heaven; that tender and disinterested heart makes, as its appeal—What is love? Is it not an admiration of all that is beautiful in nature and morality? Is it not a union of loveliness with truth? Is it not a passion, whose sole object is the rapture of contemplating the supreme beauty of this combined character?

"Where, then," cried the enthusiastic Mary, wiping the tears from her cheek, "where is the shame that can be annexed to my loving Constantine? If it be honourable to love delineated excellence; it must be equally so, to love it when embodied in a human shape. Such it is in Constantine: and if love be the reflected light of virtue, I may cease to arraign myself of what, I otherwise would have scorned. Therefore, Constantine, "cried she, raising her clasped hands,

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hands, whilst renewed tears streamed over her face, "I will love thee! I will pray for thy happiness, though its partner should be Euphemia Dundas."

Mary's eager imagination would not allow her to perceive those obstacles, in the shapes of pride and prudence, which would stand in the way of his obtaining Euphemia's hand; its light shewed to her only a rival, in the person of the little beauty; from whose direct confidence she afterwards retreated with abhorrence.

Had Euphemia been more deserving of Constantine, Miss Beaufort believed that she would have been less reluctant to hear that she also loved him. But Mary could not avoid seeing, that Miss E. Dundas possessed little to ensure comfort, if mere beauty and accidental flights of good-humour were not admitted into the scale. She was weak in understanding, timid of principle, absurd in almost every opinion she adopted;

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dopted; and, as for love, true, dignified, respectable love, she knew nothing of the passion.

Whilst Miss Beaufort meditated on this meagre schedule of her rival's merits, the probability that even such a man as Constantine might sacrifice himself to flattery and splendour, stung her to the soul.

The more she reflected on it, the more she conceived it likely. Euphemia was considered a beauty of the day; her affectation of refined prettinesses pleased many, and might charm Constantine: she was mistress of fifty thousand pounds; and did not esteem it necessary to conceal from her favourite the empire which he had acquired. Perhaps there was generosity in this openness? If so, what might it not effect on a grateful disposition? Or rather, (her mortified heart murmured in the words of her aunt Dorothy;) how might it not operate on the mind of one of that sex,

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which, at the best, is as often moved by caprice as sentiment!

Mary blushed at her application of this opinion; and, angry with herself for the injustice, which a lurking jealousy, induced her to throw on Constantine's noble nature, she resolved, whatever might be her struggles, to promote his happiness to the utmost of her power.

The next morning, when Miss Beaufort opened the study-door, she found Mr. Constantine at his station, literally baited between Miss Dundas and her honourable lover. At such moments, Mary appeared the kindest of the kind. She loved to see Constantine smile; and, whenever she could produce that effect, by turning the spleen of these polite sneerers against themselves,—his smiles, which entered her heart, afforded her a banquet, for hours after his departure.

Mary drew out her netting, (which was a purse for Lady Tinemouth;) and, taking a seat beside Thaddeus, strove, along

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along with Euphemia, to occupy his attention entirely, that he might not catch even one of those insolent glances, which were passing from Lascelles and a new ally, whom he had obtained in the pretty Lady Villiers.

This lady seemed to take extreme pleasure in accosting Thaddeus by the appellation of "friend, my good man, Mr. what's your name?" and similar squibs of insult, with which the prosperous assail the unfortunate. Such random shots often inflict the most galling wounds.

However, *friend, my good man*, and *Mr. what's your name*, disappointed this lady's small artillery of effect. He seemed invulnerable, both to her insolence, and to her affectation; for, to be thought charming, by even Miss Dundas's contemned tutor, was not to be despised; though, at the very moment in which she desired his admiration, she supposed that her haughtiness had impressed him

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with a proper sense of his own meanness, and a high conception of her dignity.

She jumped about the room; assumed infantine airs, played with Euphemia's lap-dog, fondled it, seated herself on the floor, and swept the carpet with her fine flaxen tresses; but she performed the routine of captivation in vain. Thaddeus recollected having seen this pretty full-grown baby, in her peculiar character, of a profligate wife, pawning her own and her husband's property; he remembered this, and the united shafts of her charms and folly, fell unnoticed to the ground.

When Thaddeus took his leave, Miss Beaufort, as was her custom, retired for an hour to read in her dressing-room, before she directed her attention to the toilet. She opened a book, and ran over a few pages of De Stael's Treatise on the passions; but such reasoning was too abstracted

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abstracted for her present frame of mind, and she threw the volume down.

She dipped a pen in the ink-stand. Being a letter in debt to her guardian, she thought she could defray it now. She accomplished "Dear Sir," and stopped. Whilst she rested on her elbow, and heedless of what she was doing, bit the feather of her quill to pieces; no other idea offered itself than the figure of Thaddeus, sitting '*severe in youthful beauty!*' She saw him surrounded by those contumelies, which the unworthy bestow on the merit, they can neither emulate nor overlook.

Uneasy with herself, she pushed the table away; and leaning her cheek on her arm, gazed into the rainbow varieties of a beau-pot of flowers, which occupied the fire-place. Even their gay colours appeared to fade before her sight, and present to her vacant eye the form of Thaddeus, with the melancholy air which shaded his movements. She

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turned round, but could not disengage herself from the spirit that was within her; his half-suppressed sighs seemed yet to thrill in her ear, and weigh upon her heart.

"Incomparable young man!" cried she, starting up, "why art thou so wretched?—O! Lady Tinemouth, why have you told me so much of his virtue? Why have I convinced myself, that what you said is true? Oh! why was I formed to love an excellence which I never can approach?"

The natural reply to these self-demanded questions, suggesting itself, she assented with a tear, to the whisperings of her heart—that when philosophy would banish the affections, it is incapable of filling their place.

She rung the bell for her maid.

"Marshall, who dines with Lady Dundas to-day?"

"I believe, Ma'am," replied the girl, "Mr.

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"Mr. Lascelles, Lady Villiers, and the Marquis of Elesmere."

"I detest them all three!" cried Mary, with a petulence to which she was little liable; "dress me how you like, I am indifferent to my appearance."

Marshall obeyed the commands of her lady, who bent her eyes on a little volume of poems written by Egerton Brydges, until her maid, having fixed the last pearl comb in her beautiful hair, exclaimed, "Dear Ma'am, you are so pale to-day! shall I put on the least bit of rouge?"

"No," returned Mary, glancing a look over her languid features, "no Marshall, I appear as well as I desire. Any chance of passing unnoticed in company I despise, is worth retaining. No one will be here this evening whom I care to please."

She was mistaken; other company had been invited besides those whom the maid mentioned; and Miss Beaufort

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continued from seven o'clock until ten, the period at which the ladies left the table, annoyed to death by the insipid and pert compliments of the men.

Sick of their subjectless and dragging conversation, she gladly followed Lady Dundas to the drawing-room; where, opening her netting-case, she took her station beneath one of the lustres in a remote corner, hoping to find a retreat from the ceaseless nonsense of her ladyship's guests.

After half an hour had elapsed, the gentlemen from below, recruited by fresh company, thronged in fast; and, notwithstanding it was styled a family party, Miss Beaufort saw many strange faces,—amongst whom she observed an elderly clergyman, who was looking about for a chair. The yawning Lascelles threw himself along the only vacant sofa, just as the gentleman approached it.

Miss Beaufort immediately resigned her

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her place, and was moving on to another room, when the coxcomb springing up, begged permission to admire her work; and taking it from her, pursued her, twisting the purse into a rope round his fingers, declaring how pretty it was, whilst he thrust, (in his own opinion,) his prettier hand before her eyes.

Mary walked forward, smiling with contempt, until they reached the painted saloon, where the Miss Dundas's were closely engaged in conversation with the Marquis of Elesmere.

Lascelles, who trembled for his Golconda, at this sight stepped briskly up. Miss Beaufort, who did not wish to lose sight of her purse whilst in the power of such a *Lothario*, followed him, and placed herself against the arm of the sofa on which Euphemia sat.

Lascelles now bowed his scented locks to Diana in vain, Lord Elesmore was describing the last heat at Newmarket,

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and the attention of neither lady could be withdrawn.

The beau became so irritated by the neglect of Euphemia, and so nettled at her sister's overlooking him, that, assuming a gay air, he struck Miss Dundas's arm a smart stroke with Miss Beaufort's purse; and laughing, to shew the strong opposition between his broad white teeth, and the miserable mouth of his lordly rival; hoped to alarm him by his familiarity; and to obtain a triumph over the ladies, by degrading them in the eyes of the peer.

"Miss Dundas," demanded he, "who the devil was that your sister walked with the other day in Portland Place?"

"Me!" cried Euphemia, surprised.

"Aye," returned he; "I was crossing from Weymouth-street, when I perceived you accost a strange looking man. You may remember you sauntered with him as far as Sir William Miller's. I would have joined you; but

but seeing the family standing in the balcony, I did not chuse them to suppose, that perhaps *I* had brought you into such low company."

"Who was it, Euphemia?" inquired Miss Dundas, in a severe tone.

"I wonder he affects to be ignorant," answered her sister, angrily, "he knows very well, it was only Mr. Constantine."

"And who is Mr. Constantine?" demanded the marquis. Mr. Lascelles shrugged his shoulders.

"E'faith, my lord! a fellow whom nobody knows; a teacher of languages, giving himself the airs of a prince. A writer of poetry; and a man who will draw you, your house, and dogs, if you will pay him for it."

Mary's heart swelled.

"What, a French emigrant?" drawled his lordship, dropping his lip; "and the lovely Euphemia wishes to soothe his sorrows."

"No,

"No, my lord," stammered Euphemia, "he is—he is——"

"What!" interrupted Lascelles, with a malicious grin, "a wandering beggar; who thrusts himself into a society, which may some day repay his insolence with chastisement! And for the people who encourage him, they had better beware of being themselves driven from all good company. Such confounders of degrees, ought to be degraded from the rank, which they disgrace. I understand that his chief protectress, is Lady Tinemouth; and, by way of an auxiliary, Lady Sara Roos evinces, that she is not quite inconsolable at the absence of her husband."

Mary, pale, and trembling at the scandal, which his last words insinuated, opened her lips to speak, when Miss Dundas (whose angry eyes darted from her sister to her lover) exclaimed, "Mr. Lascelles, I know not what you mean. The subject you have taken up is below my

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my discussion; yet, I must confess, if Euphemia ever have disgraced herself so far as to be seen walking with a school-master, she deserves all you have said."

"And why might I not walk with him, sister?" asked the poor culprit, suddenly recovering from her confusion, and looking pertly up, "who knew that he was not a gentleman?"

"Every body, ma'am," interrupted Lascelles; "and when a young woman of fashion condescends to be seen equalizing herself with a creature depending on his wits for support, she is very likely to incur the contempt of her acquaintance, and the censure of her friends."

"She is, Sir," said Mary, holding down her indignant heart, and forcing her countenance to appear serene; "for she ought to know, that those men of fashion, who have no wits, either to be their support or ornament, if they did not

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not proscribe talents from their circle, must soon find '*the greater glory dim the less.*"

"True, Madam," cried Lord Berrington, who, having entered during the contest, stood unobserved until this moment; "and that gold and title will prove mere dross and bubble when struck by the Ithuriel touch of Genius."

Mary turned round at the sound of his philanthropic voice, and gave him one of those glances which go immediately to the soul.

"Come, Miss Beaufort," cried he, taking her hand, "I see the young musician yonder, who has so recently astonished the public. I believe he is going to sing. Let us leave this discordant corner, and seek harmony by his side."

Mary obeyed the impulse of his arm, and seating herself a few paces off the musical

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musical party, Berrington took his station behind her chair.

When the finest and most melting voice in the world, had ceased the last stanza of "*From shades of night*;" Mary's eyes, full of admiration, and transport, which rapid association rendered more intense, remained fixed on the singer. Lord Berrington smiled at the vivid expression of her countenance; and, as the inimitable Braham moved from the instrument, exclaimed, "Come, come, Miss Beaufort, I won't allow that Orphean boy to run away with all your attention; listen to my merits. Do you know, if it were not for my timely lectures, little Lascelles would grow the most insufferable gossip about town? There is not a match, nor a divorce, near St. James's, of which he cannot repeat all the whys and wherefores. I call him Sir Benjamin Backbite; and I believe he hates me worse than the devil."

"Such

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"Such a man's dislike," rejoined Mary, "is the highest encomium he can bestow. I never yet heard him speak well of a person who did not resemble himself."

"And he is not consistent even there," resumed the Viscount; "I am not sure that I have always heard him speak in the gentlest terms of Miss Dundas. Yet, on this tropic, I cannot quite blame him; for, on my honour, she provokes me beyond any woman I know."

"Many women," replied Mary, smiling "would esteem that a flattering instance of power."

"And, like every thing that flatters," returned he, "it would tell a falsehood. A shrew can provoke the man who detests her. And for Miss Dundas," continued he, "notwithstanding her parade of learning, her judgment has not been taught to decide rightly; consequently she generally espouses the wrong side of the argument; and I may say, with somebody

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somebody whose name I have forgotten, that any one who knows Diana Dundas, never need be at a loss for a woman to call *impertinent*."

"You are not usually so severe, my lord!"

"I am not usually so sincere, Miss Beaufort," answered he, "but I see that you think for yourself; therefore I make no hesitation in speaking what *I* think —to you."

His auditor bowed her head. Lady Dundas at that moment beckoned him across the room. Her ladyship compelled him to sit down to whist. He cast a rueful glance at Mary, and took a seat opposite to his costly partner."

"Lord Berrington is a very worthy young man," observed the clergyman, to whom Miss Beaufort, at the beginning of the evening, had resigned her chair; "I presume, Madam, that you

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you have been honouring him with your conversation."

"Yes," returned Mary, noticing the benign countenance of the venerable speaker; "I have not had the pleasure of long knowing his lordship; but what I have seen of his character, is highly to his advantage."

"I was intimate in his father's house for years," rejoined the gentleman; "I knew this young nobleman from a boy. If he have faults, he owes them to his mother, who doated on him, and rather directed his care to the adornment of a really handsome person, than to the cultivation of talents, which he has since learned to appreciate."

"I believe Lord Berrington to be very sensible, and, above all, very humane," returned Miss Beaufort.

"He is so," replied the old gentleman; "yet it was not till he had attained the age of twenty-two, that he appeared

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peared to know, that he had any thing to do in the world, besides dressing and attending on the fair. His taste produced the first, whilst the urbanity of his disposition gave birth to the latter. When Berrington arrived at his title, he was about five-and-twenty. Sorrow for the death of his amiable parents, who died in the same month, afforded him leisure to find his reason. He discovered that he had been acting a part beneath him; and he soon implanted on the old stock those excellent acquirements of the mind which you see he possesses. In spite of this regeneration," continued he, casting a good-humoured glance on the dove-coloured silk stockings, breeches, and waistcoat of the Viscount; "you perceive that first impressions will remain. He loves dress, but he loves justice and philanthropy better."

"This eulogy, Sir," said Mary, "affords me real pleasure. May I know the

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the name of the gentleman with whom I have the honour to converse?"

"My name is Blackmore," returned he.

"Dr. Blackmore?"

"The same."

He was the same Dr. Blackmore, who had been struck by the appearance of the Count Sobieski at the Hummums; and who, being a rare visitor at Lady Dundas's, had never, by any chance, met a second time with the object of his compassion.

"I am happy," resumed Miss Beaufort, "in having the good fortune to meet a gentleman, of whom I have so frequently heard my guardian express sentiments of esteem."

"Ah!" replied he, "I have not seen him since the death of his lady; I hope that he and his son are well?"

"Perfectly," returned she.

"You, Madam, I suppose, are my lady's niece, Miss Beaufort?"

"I am,

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"I am, Sir."

"Well, I rejoice at this incident," rejoined he, pressing her hand; "I knew your mother when she was a lovely girl. She used to spend her summers with the late Lady Somerset, then Miss Beaufort, at the castle. It was there that I had the honour of cultivating her friendship."

"I do not remember ever having seen my mother," replied the now thoughtful Mary. Dr. Blackmore, observing the expression of her countenance, smiled kindly, and said, "I fear I am to blame here. This is a sad way of beginning an acquaintance to which I introduced myself. But your goodness must pardon me," continued he, "for I have so long accustomed myself to speak what I think to those whom I love, that sometimes, as in this case, I undesignedly inflict pain."

"Not in this case," returned Miss Beaufort; "I am always pleased when listening

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listening to a friend of my mother; and particularly so, when he speaks in her praise."

The breaking up of the card tables prevented any further conversation; and Lord Berrington again approaching the sofa where she sat, exclaimed, as he perceived her companion, "Ah! my good doctor; what, you have presented yourself at this fair shrine? I declare, you eccentric folk may dare any thing. Whilst you are free, Miss Beaufort," added he, "turning to her, "adopt this bit of advice, which a good lady once gave me, and which I have implicitly followed, 'When you are young, get the character of an oddity, and it seats you in an easy chair for life."

Mary was interrupted in her reply by a general stir amongst the company; who, now that cards were over, like bees and wasps, were swarming about the

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the room, gathering and stinging as they went.

At two the house was cleared; and Miss Beaufort, exhausted, threw herself on her pillow, to think, and dream of Thaddeus.

CHAP.

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CHAP. V.

IF it be true what the vivid imaginations of poets have often asserted, that, when the soul dreams, it is in the actual presence of those beings whose images present themselves to their slumbers, then have the spirits of Thaddeus and Mary been commingled at the hour of midnight; then has the young Sobieski again visited his distant country; again seen it victorious; again knelt before his sainted parents.

From such visions as these did Thaddeus awake in the morning, after having spent the preceding evening with Lady Tinemouth.

He had walked with her ladyship in Hyde-Park till a late hour. By the mild light of the moon, which shone brightly through the still, balmy air of a midsummer night, they took their way twice

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along the shadowy bank of the Serpentine.

There is a solemn appeal to the soul in the repose of nature, that "makes itself be felt." No syllable from either Thaddeus or the Countess, broke the universal silence. Thaddeus looked around, on the clear expanse of the water overshaded by the long reflexion of the deepening woods: then raising his eyes to that beautiful planet, which has excited the tenderest thoughts, in every sympathetic breast, since the beginning of the world; he drew a deep sigh. The Countess echoed it.

"In such a night as this," said Thaddeus, in a low voice, as if afraid to disturb the sleeping deity of the place, "I used to walk the ramparts of Villanow, with my dear departed mother, and gaze on that lovely orb: when I was far distant from her, I have looked at it from the door of my tent, and, fancying that her eyes were then fixed on the

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same object with my own, I found happiness in the idea."

A tear stole down the cheek of Thaddeus. That moon yet shone brightly; but his mother's eyes were closed in the grave.

"Villanow!" repeated the Countess in a tone of surprise, "surely, that was the seat of the celebrated Palatine of Masovia! You have discovered yourself, Constantine! I am much mistaken, if you be not his grandson, the far-famed Thaddeus Sobieski?"

Thaddeus had allowed the remembrances pressing on his mind, to draw him into a speech, which he found had disclosed to the quick apprehension of the Countess, what his pride would for ever have concealed.

"I have indeed betrayed my secret;" cried he, incapable of denying it; "but, dear Lady Tinemouth, as you value my feelings, never let it escape your lips. Having long considered you as my best friend,

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friend, loved you as a parent, I forgot in the recollection of my beloved mother, now no more, that I had withheld any of my history from you."

"Gracious Providence!" exclaimed her ladyship, after a moment's pause, in which ten thousand admiring and pitying reflections thronged on her mind, "is it possible? Can it be the Count Sobieski, that brave and illustrious youth, of whom every foreigner spoke with wonder? Can it be him, that I behold in the poor unfriended Constantine?"

"Even so," returned Thaddeus, pressing her hand; "my country is no more. I am now forgotten by the world, as I have been by fortune. I have nothing to do on the earth, but to fulfil the few duties which friendship has enjoined; and then, it will be indifferent to me how soon I am laid in its bosom."

"You are too young, dear Constantine, (for I am yet to call you by that

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name,) to despair of happiness's being reserved for you."

"No, my dear Lady Tinemouth, I do not cheat myself with such hope; I am not so importunate with the gracious Being who gave me life and reason. He bestowed upon me for a while, the tenderest connexions; friends, rank, honours, glory: all these were crushed in the fall of Poland; yet I survive. I seek resignation only, and I have found it: it cost me many a struggle; but the contest was due to the decrees of that all-wise Creator, who gave my first years to happiness."

"Inestimable young man!" cried the Countess, wiping the flowing tears from her eyes, "you teach misfortune dignity! Not when all Warsaw rose in a body to thank you, as one of its bravest deliverers; not when the king received you in the senate with open arms; could you have appeared to me so worthy of admiration, as at this moment; when, conscious

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conscious of having been all this, you submit to the direct reverse of fate, because you believe it to be the will of your Maker! Ah! little does Miss Beaufort think, when seated by your side, that she is conversing with the very hero whom she has so often wished to see!"

"Miss Beaufort!" echoed Thaddeus, his heart glowing with delight. "Did she ever hear of me by the name of Sobieski!"

"Who has not?" returned the Countess, "every heart that could be interested by suffering virtue, has heard, and must well remember the calamities of your country. Whilst the newspapers of the day, informed us of the struggles which Poland made for liberty; they noticed amongst the first of her champions, the Palatine of Masovia, Kosciuszko, and yourself. Many an evening have I spent with Lady Somerset and Mary Beaufort, lamenting the fate of that devoted kingdom."

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During this declaration, a variety of transporting emotions agitated the mind of Thaddeus; until recollecting, with a bitter pang, the shameless ingratitude of Pembroke, and the cruel possibility of being recognized by the Earl of Tinemouth as his son; he exclaimed, "My dearest Madam, I entreat, that what I have revealed to you, may never be divulged! Miss Beaufort's friendship would indeed be happiness; but I cannot purchase even so great a bliss, at the expense of principles, which are knit with my life."

"How?" cried the Countess, "is not your name, and all its attendant ideas, an honour which the proudest man might boast?"

Thaddeus pressed her ladyship's hand gratefully to his heart.

"You are kind! very kind! Yet, I cannot retract. Confide, dear Lady Tinemouth, in the justice of my resolution. I could not bear cold pity; I could not bear

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bear the heartless comments of people, who, pretending to compassion, would load me with a heavier sense of my calamities. Besides, there are persons in England, who are so much the objects of my aversion, that I would rather die than let them know that I exist. Therefore, on these grounds, let me implore you to preserve my secret."

Lady Tinemouth saw by the earnestness of his manner, that she ought to comply: and, without further hesitation, promised all the silence on the subject which he could require.

This long moonlight conversation, by awakening those dormant remembrances, which were cherished, though hidden in his bosom, gave birth to an effort of imagination, that painted within the rapid series of his tumultuous dreams, the images of every being whom he had ever loved, or now continued to regard with interest.

Proceeding next morning towards

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Harley-street, he mused on what had happened;. and pleased that he had, though unpremeditatedly, paid the just compliment of his entire confidence, to the uncommon friendship of the Countess; he arrived at Lady Dundas's door, before he was sensible of the ground he had passed over; and, in a few minutes afterwards was ushered into his accustomed purgatory.

When the servant opened the study-door, Miss Euphemia was again alone. Thaddeus recoiled, but he could not retreat.

"Come in, Mr. Constantine," cried the little beauty, in a languid tone; "my sister is gone to the riding school with Mr. Lascelles. Miss Beaufort wanted me to drive out with her and my mother; but I preferred waiting for you."

The Count bowed; and, almost retreating with fear, of what might next be said, he gladly heard a thundering knock

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knock at the door, and, a moment after, the voice of Miss Dundas ascending the stairs.

He had just opened his books, when she entered, followed by her lover. Panting under a heavy riding-habit, she flung herself on a sofa, and began to vilify "the odious heat of Fozard's odious place;" and telling Euphemia that she would play truant to-day, ordered her to attend to her lessons.

Owing to the warmth of the weather, Thaddeus came out this morning without boots; and it being the first time that the exquisite proportion of his limb had been seen by any of the present company, excepting Euphemia, Lascelles, bursting with a disdain of such insignificant distinctions, (which he would not call envy) measured the Count's fine leg with his insolent eyes; then, declaring that he was quite in a furnace, took the corner of his glove, and waving it to and fro, half muttered, "*Come, gentle air.*"

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"*The fairer* Lascelles *cries!*" exclaimed Euphemia, looking off her exercise.

"What! does your master teach you wit?" drawled the coxcomb, with a particular emphasis.

Thaddeus, affecting not to hear, continued to direct his pupil.

The indefatigable Lascelles having observed the complacence with which the Count always regarded Miss Beaufort, determined the goad should fret; and drawing out of his pocket, the netting, which he had taken the night before from Mary, exclaimed, "'Fore Heaven, here is my little Beaufort's purse!"

Thaddeus started, and unconsciously looking up, beheld the well-known work of Mary, dangling in the hand of Lascelles. He suffered pangs unknown to him; his eyes became dim, and hardly knowing what he saw or said, he pursued the lesson with increased rapidity.

The malicious puppy, finding his malice take effect, with a careless air threw his

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his clumsy limbs on the vacant part of the sofa, which Miss Dundas had quitted to seat herself nearer the window, and cried, in a voice of sudden recollection—

"By the bye, that Miss Mary Beaufort, when she chuses to be sincere, is a staunch little aristocrat."

"You may as well tell me," replied Miss Dundas, with a contemptuous curl of her lip, "that she is the Empress of Russia."

"I beg your pardon," cried he, raising his voice at his judgment being doubted; "I will prove it to you. When she gave me this gew-gaw," added he, rumpling the purse in his hand, "she told me an everlasting story about some friend of her's, whose music-master, having mistaken some condescensions on her part, had dared to snatch a kiss from her snowy fingers, as they were flying over the strings of her harp. You cannot imagine how Beaufort's pretty eyes blazed as she related this tale; I verily believe,

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believe, had it been herself, she would have given poor Tweedledum a flourish across the cheek."

Miss Dundas laughed.

"These energetic young ladies possess not the gentlest passions in the world; and after Miss Beaufort's outrageous sally, last night, upon you, I should not wonder at any indecorum she might commit."

"Outrageous to me!" echoed the fop, dipping the end of the netting into Diana's lavender-bottle, and dabbing his temples, "she was always too civil by half. I hate forward girls."

Thaddeus shut the large dictionary, which lay before him, with a violence, that made the puppy start; and rising hastily from his chair, with a face as red as crimson, was taking up his hat, when the door opened, and Mary appeared.

A white chip-hat was resting lightly on the glittering tresses which waved over her forehead; whilst her lace-shade, gently

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gently discomposed by the air, half veiled, and half revealed, her graceful figure. She entered with a smile, and walking up to the side of the table where Thaddeus was standing, inquired after his friend's health. He answered her in a voice unusually agitated. All that he had been told by the Countess of her favourable opinion of him, and the slander he had just heard from Diana's lover, were at once present to his mind.

He was yet speaking, when Miss Beaufort, casually looking towards the other side of the room, saw her purse still acting the part of a handkerchief in the hand of Mr. Lascelles.

"Look, Mr. Constantine," said she, gaily tapping his arm with her parasol, "how the most precious things may be degraded! There is the netting you have so often admired, and which I intended for Lady Tinemouth's pocket, debased to do the office of Mr. Lascelles's napkin."

"You gave it to him, Miss Beaufort," cried

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cried Miss Dundas; "and, after that, surely he may use it as he values it?"

"If I could have given it to Mr. Lascelles, Madam, I should hardly have taken notice of its fate."

Miss Dundas, believing what her lover had advanced, was displeased at Mary for having, by presents, interfered with any of her danglers, and rather angrily replied—"Mr. Lascelles said you gave it to him; and certainly you would not insinuate a word against his veracity?"

"No, not *insinuate*," returned Miss Beaufort, "but *affirm*, that he has forgotten his veracity, at least, in this statement."

Lascelles yawned—"Lord bless me, ladies, how you quarrel! You will disturb Monsieur."

"Mr. Constantine," returned Mary, blushing with indignation, "cannot be disturbed by nonsense."

Thaddeus again took his hat: bowing to his lovely champion, with an expression

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sion of countenance, which he little suspected had passed from his heart to his eyes, he was preparing to take his leave, when Euphemia requested him to inform her whether she had folded down the right pages for the next exercise. He drew near, and was leaning over her chair to look at the book, when she whispered, "Don't be hurt at what Lascelles says; he is always jealous of any body who is handsomer than himself."

Thaddeus bowed to her with a face of scarlet; for, on meeting the eyes of Mary, he saw that she had heard this intended comforter as well as himself; and, uttering a few incoherent sentences to both ladies, he hurried out of the room.

CHAP.

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CHAP. VI.

THE Count Sobieski was prevented from paying his customary visit next morning, in Harley-street, by the sudden illness of the general, who was struck, at seven o'clock, by a fit of the palsy.

When Dr. Cavendish beheld the poor old man stretched along the bed, and hardly exhibiting signs of life, he pronounced it to be a death-stroke. At this sentence, Thaddeus turning deadly pale, staggered to a seat, with his eyes fixed on the altered features of his friend. Dr. Cavendish took his hand.

"Recollect yourself, my dear Sir! Happen when it will, his death must be a release. But do not expect it for some time; he may yet linger a week or a fortnight."

"Not

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"Not in pain, I hope!" said Thaddeus, rising.

"No;" returned the doctor, "probably he will remain as you now see him, and expire like the last glimmer of a dying taper."

The benevolent Cavendish proceeded to give particular directions to Thaddeus and Mrs. Robson, who promised to act as nurse; and then, with regret left the stunned Count to the melancholy task of watching by the bed-side of his venerable friend.

Thaddeus now retained no thought that was not rivetted on the emaciated form before him. Whilst the unconscious invalid struggled for respiration, he listened to his short and convulsed breathing, with sensations which seemed to tear the strings of his own breast. Unable to bear it longer, he moved opposite to the fire, and seating himself, with his pallid face and aching head supported on his arm, which rested

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ed on a plain deal table, he remained, meeting no other suspension from deep meditation, than the occasional appearance of Mrs. Robson on tiptoes, peeping in, and inquiring whether he wanted any thing.

From this depressing reverie he was aroused next morning, at nine o'clock, by the entrance of Dr. Cavendish. Thaddeus seized his hand with the eagerness of anxiety,—"he has not been worse, my dear Sir, may I hope———"

The doctor, not suffering him to finish with what he hoped, shook his head, and waving his hand in sign of the vanity of that hope, advanced to the bed of the general, and felt his pulse. His opinion exactly coincided with what he had declared before, differing only in one particular, that he now saw no absolute threatenings of immediate dissolution.

"Poor Butzou!" said Thaddeus, as the doctor withdrew, putting the general's

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ral's motionless hand to his quivering lips, "I never will leave thee! I will watch by thee, thou last relic of my country!"

With anguish at his heart, he wrote a few hasty lines to the Countess: Then, addressing Miss Dundas, he offered, as the reason for his late and continued absence, the danger of his friend.

His note found Miss Dundas at ended, by her constant shadow, Mr. Lascelles; Lady Villiers; and two or three more fine ladies and gentlemen; besides Euphemia and Miss Beaufort, who, with pensive countenances, were waiting the arrival of its writer.

When Miss Dundas took the billet off the silver salver, on which her man presented it, and looked at the superscription, she threw it into the lap of Lascelles."

"There," cried she, "is an excuse, I suppose, from Mr. Constantine, for his

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his impertinence in not coming hither yesterday. Read it, Lascelles."

"'Fore Gad, I wouldn't touch it for an earldom!" exclaimed the affected puppy, jerking it on the table. "It might infect me with the hypochondriacs. Pray, Phemy, do you peruse it."

Euphemia, in her eagerness to learn what detained Mr. Constantine, neglected the insolence of the request, and hastily breaking the seal, reads as follows:

"Mr. Constantine hopes that a sudden and dangerous disorder, which has attacked the life of a very dear friend with whom he resides, will be a sufficient appeal to the humanity of the Miss Dundasses, and obtain their pardon, for his relinquishing the honour of attending them yesterday and to-day."

"Dear me!" cried Euphemia, piteously, "how sorry I am! I dare say, it is that white-haired old gentleman whom

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whom we saw in the Park. You remember, Mary, he was sick?"

"Probably," returned Miss Beaufort, with her eyes fixed on the agitated handwriting of Thaddeus.

"Throw the letter into the street, Phemy!" cried Miss Dundas, affecting sudden terror, "Who knows but what it is a fever the man has got, and we may all catch our deaths."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Mary, in a voice of real alarm; but it was for Thaddeus; not fear of any infection which the paper might bring to herself.

"Lascelles, take away the filthy scrawl from Phemy. How can you be so headstrong, child?" cried Diana, snatching the letter from her sister, and throwing it out of the window; "I declare, you are sufficient to provoke a saint."

"Then, you may keep your temper, Di,"

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Di," returned Euphemia, with a sneer; "you are far enough from that title."

Miss Dundas made a very angry reply, which was retaliated with another; and a still more noisy and disagreeable altercation might have taken place, had not a good-humoured lad, a brother-in-law of Lady Villiers, in hopes of calling off the attention of the sisters, exclaimed, "Bless me, Miss Dundas, your little dog has pulled a folded sheet of paper from under that stand of flowers! Perhaps it may be of consequence!"

"Fly! Take it up, George!" cried Lady Villiers; "Esop will tear it to atoms whilst you are asking questions."

After a chace round the room, over chairs, and through tables, George Villiers at length plucked the devoted piece of paper out of the dog's mouth; and, as Miss Beaufort was gathering up her working materials to leave the room, opened it and cried, in a voice of

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of triumph, "By Jove! it is a copy of verses!"

"Verses!" demanded Euphemia, feeling in her pocket, and colouring; "let me see them."

"That you sha'n't," roared Lascelles, catching them out of the boy's hand, "if they be your writing, we will have them."

"Help me, Mary!" cried Euphemia, turning to Miss Beaufort; "I know that nobody is a poet in this house, but myself. They must be mine, and I will have them."

"Surely, Mr. Lascelles," said Mary, compassionating the poor girl's anxiety, "you will not be so rude as to detain them from their right owner?"

"O! but I will," cried he, mounting on a table, to get out of Euphemia's reach, who now, half crying, tried to snatch at the paper. "Let me alone, Miss Phemy. I will read them; so here goes it."

Miss

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Miss Dundas laughed at her sister's confused looks, whilst Lascelles prepared to read, in a loud voice, the following verses. They had been hastily scribbled in pencil by Thaddeus, a long time ago. Having put them by mistake, with some other papers, into his pocket, he had dropped them next day, in taking out his handkerchief, at Lady Dundas's. Lascelles cleared his throat with three hems, then raising his right hand with a flourish of action, in a very pompous tone, began—

Like one, whom Etna's torrent fires have sent
Far from the land, where his first youth was spent;
Who, inly drooping, on a foreign shore
Broods over scenes which charm his eyes no more:
And while his country's ruin wakes the groan,
Yearns, for the buried hut, he call'd his own.—
So driv'n, O Poland! from thy ravag'd plains,
So mourning o'er thy sad, but lov'd remains,
A houseless wretch, *I* wander through the world,
From Friends, from Grandeur, and from Glory hurl'd!
O! not, that each long night my weary eyes
Sink into Sleep, unlull'd by Pity's sighs;

Not,

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Not, that in bitter tears my bread is steep'd;
Tears drawn by insults on my sorrows heap'd;—
Not, that my thoughts recal a mother's grave;—
Recal the sire I would have died to save,
Who fell before me, bleeding on the field,
Whilst I in vain oppos'd the fruitless shield:—
Ah! not for these I grieve!—Tho' mental woe
More deadly still, scarce Fancy's self could know.
O'er want and private griefs the soul can climb,
Virtue subdues the one, the other Time;—
But, at his country's fall, the patriot feels
A grief, no time, no drug, no reason heals.—
Mem'ry! remorseless murderer! whose voice
Kills as it sounds; who never says,—rejoice!
To my deserted heart, by joy forgot;
Thou pale, thou midnight spectre, haunt me not!
Thou dost but point to where sublimely stands
A glorious temple, rear'd by Freedom's hands,
Circled with palms and laurels, crown'd with light,
Darting Truth's piercing sun on mortal sight:
Then, rushing on, leagu'd fiends of hellish birth,
Level the mighty fabric with the earth!——
Slept the red bolt of Vengeance in that hour,
When virtuous Freedom fell the slave of Pow'r!
Slumber'd the God of Justice! that no brand
Blasted, with blazing wing, the impious band!—
Dread God of Justice! to thy will I kneel,
Tho' still my filial heart must bleed and feel,

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Tho' still the proud convulsive throb will rise,
When fools my country's wrongs and woes despise;
When low-soul'd Pomp, vain Wealth, that Pity gives,
Which Virtue ne'er bestows, and ne'er receives,—
That Pity, stabbing where it vaunts to cure,
Which barbs the dart of Want, and makes it sure;—
How far remov'd from what the feeling breast
Yields boastless, breath'd in sighs to the distress'd!
Which whispers sympathy, with tender fear,
And almost dreads to pour its balmy tear,—
But such I know not now—unseen, alone,
I heave the heavy sigh, I draw the groan;
And madd'ning, turn to days of liveliest joy,
When o'er my native hills I cast mine eye,
And said exulting—" Free men here shall sow
" The seed, that soon in tossing gold shall glow!
" While plenty, led by Liberty, shall rove,
" Gay and rejoicing, through the land they love;
" And, 'mid their loaded vines, the peasant see
" His wife, his children, breathing out—we're free!"
But now, O wretched land! above thy plains,
Half viewless thro' the gloom, vast Horror reigns.—
No happy peasant, o'er his blazing hearth,
Devotes the supper-hour to love and mirth;
No flowers on Liberty's pure altar bloom;
Alas! they wither now, and strew her tomb!—
From the great Book of Nations, fiercely rent,
My country's page to Lethe's stream is sent—

But

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But sent in vain!—Th' historic Muse shall raise,
O'er wrong'd Sarmatia's cause, the voice of praise,
Shall sing *her* dauntless on the field of death;
And blast her royal robbers bloody wreath!

"It must be Constantine's!" cried Euphemia, in a voice of surprised delight, when the reader finished, and springing up to take the paper out of his hand.

"I dare say it is," answered the ill-natured Lascelles, holding it above his head. "Come, you shall have it; only first let us hear it again; it is so mighty pretty, so very lackadaisical!"

"Give it me!" cried Euphemia, quite angry.

"Don't, Lascelles," exclaimed Miss Dundas; "the man must be a perfect ideot to write such rhodomontade."

"O! it is delectable!" returned her lover, opening the paper again; "it would make a charming ditty! Come, I will sing it. Shall it be to the tune

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of *The Babes in the Wood*, or *Chevy Chace*, or *The Beggar of Bethnal Green*?"

"Unpitying, senseless wretch!" exclaimed Mary, rising from her chair; where she had been striving to subdue those emotions, with which every line in the poem filled her heart.

"Brute!" cried the enraged Euphemia, taking courage at Miss Beaufort's unusual warmth, "I will have the paper."

"You sha'n't," answered the malicious coxcomb; and rising his arm higher than her reach, he tore it into a hundred pieces.

At this sight, Mary, no longer able to contain herself, rushed out of the room; and hurrying to her own chamber, threw herself upon the bed; where she gave way to a paroxysm of tears, which shook her almost to suffocation.

During the first burst of her indignation, her agitated spirit, breathed every appellation of abhorrence and reproach, on

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on Lascelles, and his malignant mistress. Then, wiping her flowing eyes, she said, "Yet, can I wonder, when I compare Constantine with what *they* are? The man who dares to be virtuous and great, and to appear so, arms the self-love of all common characters against him."

Such being her meditations, she refused to join the family at dinner; and it was not until evening that she felt herself at all able to treat the ill-natured groupe with decent civility.

The next morning Miss Beaufort, (to avoid spending more hours than were absolutely necessary in the company of a woman whom she now loathed,) borrowed Lady Dundas's sedan chair; and, ordering it to Lady Tinemouth's, found her ladyship at home, alone, and evidently much discomposed.

"I intrude on you, Lady Tinemouth!" said Mary, observing her looks, and withdrawing from the offered seat.

"No, my dear Miss Beaufort," replied

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her ladyship, when the servant closed the door, "I am glad you are come. I assure you I have few pleasures in solitude. Read that letter," added she, putting one into the hand of Mary, "it has just conveyed one of the cruellest stabs ever offered by a son to the heart of his mother. Read it; and you will not be surprised at finding me in the state you see."

The Countess looked on her paralysed hands as she spoke; and Miss Beaufort, taking the paper, sat down, and read to herself the following letter:

"*To the Right Honourable the Countess of Tinemouth.*

"Madam,

"I am commissioned by the Earl, my father, to inform you, that if you have lost all regard for your own character, he considers that some respect is due to the

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the mother of his son; therefore he watches your conduct.

"He has been apprised of your frequent meetings, during these many months, in Grosvenor Place, and at other people's houses, with an obscure foreigner, your declared lover. The Earl wished to suppose this false, until your shameless behaviour became so flagrant, that he esteems it worthy neither of doubt nor indulgence.

"With his own eyes he saw you, four nights ago, alone with this man in Hyde Park. Such demonstration is dreadful. Your proceedings are abominable; and if you do not, without further parley, set off, either to Craighall in Cornwall, or the Wolds, you shall receive a letter from my sister as well as myself, to tell the dishonoured Lady Tinemouth, how much she merits her daughter's contempt, added to that of

"HARWOLD."

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"And what do you mean to do, my dear Madam?" inquired Mary, shocked at an instance, so disgraceful to human nature.

"I will obey my Lord and his children," returned the Countess, bursting into tears. "My last action shall be in obedience to their will. I cannot live long; and when I am dead, perhaps the Earl's vigilance may be satisfied; perhaps, some kind friend may then plead my cause in my daughter's heart. One cruel line from her would kill me. I will at least avoid the completion of that threat, by leaving town to-morrow night."

"So soon? But I hope not to Cornwall?"

"No," replied her ladyship, "Craighall is too near Plymouth. I determine on the Wolds. Yet, why should I have a choice? It is almost a matter of indifference to what spot I am banished; in

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in what place I am to die: Any where I shall be equally remote from a friend."

Miss Beaufort's heart was oppressed when she entered the room; Lady Tinemouth's sorrows seemed to give her a licence to weep. She took her ladyship's hand, and, with difficulty, sobbed out this inarticulate offer, "Take me, dear Lady Tinemouth! I am sure my guardian will be happy to permit me to be with you, where, and how long you like."

"My dear girl," replied the Countess, kissing her wet cheek, "I thank you from my heart; but I cannot take so ungenerous an advantage of your goodness, as to consign your tender nature to the harassing task of attending on sorrow and sickness. How strangely different may even amiable dispositions be tempered! Maria Egerton is better framed for such an office. Kind as she is, the hilarity of her disposition does not allow the sympathy she bestows on

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others, to injure either her mind or her body."

Mary interrupted her. "I should be grieved, my dear Countess, to believe, that my very aptitude to serve my friends, will prove the first reason why I should be denied the pleasure. It is only in scenes of affliction that friendship is tried, and declares its truth. If Miss Egerton were not going with you, I should certainly insist on putting my affection to the ordeal."

"You mistake, my sweet friend," returned her ladyship; "Maria is forbidden to remain any longer with me. You have overlooked the postscript to Lord Harwold's letter, else you must have seen the whole of my cruel situation. Turn over the leaf."

Miss Beaufort opened the sheet, and read these few lines; which being written on the interior part of the paper, had escaped her sight.

"Go where you will, it is our special injunction,

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injunction, that you leave Miss Egerton behind you: who, we hear, has been the ambassadress in this shocking intrigue. If we learn that you disobey; and persist in such audacity, it shall be worse for you in every respect; as it will convince us, beyond a possibility of doubt, how uniform is the turpitude of your conduct."

Lady Tinemouth grasped Miss Beaufort's hand, as she threw the barbarous scrawl on the table. "And that is from the son for whom I felt all a mother's agonies; all a mother's love! Had he died the first hour in which he saw the light, what a mass of guilt might he not have escaped! It is he," added she, in a lower voice, and looking wildly round, "that breaks my heart. I could have borne his father's perfidy; but, insult, oppression, from my child! Oh, Mary, you know not its bitterness!"

Miss Beaufort could only answer with her tears.

After

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After a pause of near a quarter of an hour, in which the Countess strove to tranquillize her spirits, she resumed in a more composed voice.

"Excuse me for an instant, my dear Miss Beaufort; I must write to Mr. Constantine. I have yet to inform him that my absence is to be added to his other misfortunes."

With her eyes raining down upon the paper, she took up a pen; and hastily writing a few lines, was sealing them, when Mary, looking up, hardly conscious of the words which escaped her lips, said, with anguished eagerness, "Lady Tinemouth, you know much of that noble and unhappy young man?" Her eye irresolutely, and her cheek glowing, awaited the answer of the Countess, who, for a moment, continued to gaze on the letter she held in her hand, as if in profound thought; then all at once raising her head, and regarding the now down-cast face of her lovely friend with

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with tenderness, replied in a tone which conveyed the deep interest of her heart.

"I do Miss Beaufort. But he has reposed his griefs in my friendship and honour: therefore, I must hold them sacred."

"I will not ask you to betray them:" returned Mary, in a faultering voice, "Yet I cannot help lamenting his sufferings; and esteeming the fortitude with which he supports his fall."

The Countess looked stedfastly on her fluctuating countenance. Has Constantine, my dear girl, insinuated to you, that he ever was otherwise than as he now appears?"

Miss Beaufort could not reply. She would not trust her lips with words; but shook her head in sign that he had not. Lady Tinemouth was too well read in the human heart, to doubt, for an instant, the cause of her question, and consequent emotion. Feeling that something was due to an anxiety so disinterested,

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interested, she took her passive hand, and said, "Mary, you have guessed rightly. Though I am not authorized to tell you the real name of Constantine, nor the particulars of his history; yet, let this satisfy your generous heart, that it can never be more honourably employed, that in compassionating calamities, which ought to wreath his young brows with glory."

Miss Beaufort's eyes streamed afresh, whilst her exulting soul seemed ready to rush from her bosom.

"Mary!" continued the Countess, warmed by the recollection of his excellence; "You have no need to blush at the interest which you take in this amiable Constantine! Every trial of spirit which could have tortured youth or manhood, has been endured by him with the firmness of a hero. Ah, my sweet friend," added the Countess, pressing the hand of the confused Miss Beaufort; who, ashamed, and conscious

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ous that her behaviour betrayed how dearly she considered him, had covered her face with her handkerchief; "when you are disposed to believe that a man is as great as his titles and demands assert, examine, with a nice observance, whether his pretensions be real or artificial. Imagine him disrobed of splendor, and struggling with the world's inclemencies. If his character cannot stand this ordeal, he is only a pageant of pomp, inflated and garnished; and it is reasonable to punish his arrogance with contempt. But, on the reverse, when, like Constantine, he rises from the ashes of his fortunes in a brighter blaze of virtue; then, dearest girl," cried the Countess, encircling her with her arms, "it is the sweetest privilege of loveliness, to console and bless so rare a being."

Mary raised her deluged face from the bosom of her friend; and, clasping her hands together with trepidation and anguish,

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anguish, implored her to be as faithful to her secret as she had proved herself to Constantine's: "I would sooner die," added the agitated Mary, "than have him know my rashness, perhaps my indelicacy! Let me possess his esteem, Lady Tinemouth! Let him suppose that I only *esteem* him! More, I should shrink from; I have seen him beset by some of my sex; and to be classed with *them!* To have him imagine that my affection is like *theirs!* I could not bear it—I entreat you, let him respect me!"

The impetuosity, and almost despair, with which Miss Beaufort uttered these incoherent sentences, pierced the soul of Lady Tinemouth. How different was the spirit of this pure and dignified love, to the wild passion which she had seen shake the frame of Lady Sara Roos!

They remained silent for some time.

"May I see your ladyship to-morrow?"

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row?" asked Mary, drawing her cloak about her.

"I fear not," replied the Countess; "I leave this house to-morrow."

Miss Beaufort rose; her lips, hands, and feet trembled so, that she could hardly stand. Lady Tinemouth threw her arm round her waist, and kissing her forehead, said, "Heaven bless you, my sweet friend! May all the wishes of your innocent heart be gratified!"

The Countess supported her to the door. Mary hesitated an instant; then flinging her snowy arms over her ladyship's neck, in a voice scarcely audible, articulated—"Only tell me!—does he love Euphemia?"

Lady Tinemouth strained her to her breast—"No, my dearest girl; I am certain, both from what I have heard him say, and observed in his eyes, that had he dared to love any one, *you* would have been the object of his choice."

How

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How Miss Beaufort got into Lady Dundas's chair she had no recollection, so completely was she absorbed in the recent scene. Her mind was perplexed, her heart ached; and she arrived in Harley-street so much disordered and unwell, as to oblige her to retire immediately to her room, with the excuse of a violent pain in her head.

This interview induced Lady Tinemouth to destroy the note which she had written to Thaddeus; and before night, to frame another, better calculated to produce comfort to all parties. What she declared to Mary respecting the state of the Count's affections was sincere.

She had early penetrated through the veil of bashfulness, with which Miss Beaufort obscured that countenance, so usually the tablet of her soul. The Countess easily translated the quick receding of her eye whenever Thaddeus turned his attention towards her; the confused

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confused reply that followed any unexpected question from his lips; and, above all, the unheeded sighs heaved by her, when he left the room, or when his name was mentioned during his absence. These symptoms too truly revealed to Lady Tinemouth the state of her young friend's bosom.

But the circumstances being different, her observations on the Count were not nearly so conclusive. Mary had absolutely given the empire of her happiness, with her heart, into his hands. Thaddeus wished that his ruined hopes did not prevent him from laying his at her feet. Therefore, not having surrendered his imagination to a passion, which, in his situation, he considered as madness, he was unembarrassed in her presence; and, regarding her as a being beyond his reach, conceived no suspicions, that she entertained one dearer thought of him, than what mere philanthropy could authorize.

He

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He contemplated her unequalled beauty, graces, talents, and virtues, with an admiration bordering on idolatry! yet his heart flew from the confession that he loved her: and it was not until reason demanded of his candour, why he felt a pang on seeing Mary's purse in the hands of Mr. Lascelles, that, with a glowing cheek, he owned to himself, he was jealous: that although he had not presumed to elevate one wish towards the possession of Miss Beaufort; yet, when Lascelles flaunted her name on his tongue, he found how deep would be the wound in his peace, should she ever give her hand to another.

Confounded at this discovery of a passion the seeds of which, he supposed, had been crushed by the weight of his misfortunes, he proceeded homewards in a trance of thought, not far differing from that of the dreamer, who sinks into a light but harassing slumber, and, full

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full of terror, doubts whether he be sleeping or awake.

The sudden illness of General Butzou having put these ideas to flight, Thaddeus was sitting on the bed side, with his anxious thoughts fixed on the pale spectacle of mortality before him, when Nancy brought in a letter from the Countess. He took it, and going to the window, undrew the curtain, where he read, with mingled pain and pleasure, the following epistle:

"*To Mr. Constantine.*

"I know not, my dear Count, when I shall be permitted to see you again; perhaps never on this side the grave!

"Since Heaven has denied me the tenderness of my own children, it would have been a comfort to me, might I have continued to act a parent's part by you. But my cruel lord, and my more cruel son, jealous of the consolation I meet in the society of my few intimate

intimate friends, command me to quit London; and as I have ever made it a system to obey their injunctions strictly, I shall go.

"It pierces me to the soul, my *dear son!* (allow my maternal heart to call you by that name!) it distresses me deeply that I am compelled to leave the place where *you* are: and more, I cannot see you before my departure, for I quit town to-morrow afternoon.

"Write to me often, my loved Sobieski: your letters will be some alleviation to my lot during the fulfilment of my hard duty.

"Wear the enclosed gold chain for my sake; it is one of two given me along time ago by Miss Beaufort. If I have not greatly mistaken you, the present will now possess a double value in your estimation: indeed it ought. Sensibility and thankfulness being properties of your nature, they will not deny a lively gratitude to the generous interest with

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with which that amiable young woman regards your fate. It is impossible that the avowed Count Sobieski (whom, a year ago, I remember her animated fancy painted in the most romantic colours), could excite more of her esteem than I know she has bestowed on the untitled Constantine.

"She is all nobleness and affection. Although I am sensible that she will leave much behind her in London to regret, she insists on accompanying me to the Wolds. Averse to transgress so far on her goodness, I firmly refused her offer until this evening, when I received so warm and urging a letter from the kind girl, that I could no longer withhold my consent.

"Indeed, this lovely creature's active friendship proves of high consequence to me now, situated as I am with regard to a new whim of the Earl's. Had she not benevolently presented herself, in obedience to my lord's commands, I should

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should have been obliged to go alone; he having taken some wild antipathy to Miss Egerton, whose company he has interdicted. At any rate, her parents would not have allowed me her society much longer, for Mr. Montresor is to return this month.

"I shall not be easy, my dear Count, until I hear from you. Pray write soon; and inform me of every particular respecting the poor General: is he likely to recover?

"In all things, my *loved son*, in which I can serve you, remember, that I expect you will call upon me *as a mother*. Your own could hardly have regarded you with deeper tenderness, than does your affectionate and faithful

"ADELIZA TINEMOUTH.

"*Grosvenor Place,*
"*Thursday, midnight.*

"Direct to me at Harwold-park, Wolds, Lincolnshire."

Several

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Several opposite emotions discomposed the mind of Thaddeus whilst reading this epistle. Increased abhorrence of the man, whom he believed to be incontestably his father, united with regret, arising from the proposed departure of Lady Tinemouth, could neither subdue the balmy effect of her maternal affection, nor wholly check that thrill, which the unusual mentioning of Miss Beaufort's name made throb in his heart, and paint his cheeks with crimson. He read the sentence which contained the assurances of her friendship a third time.

"Delicious poison!" cried he, kissing the paper; "if adoring thee, lovely Mary, be added to my other sorrows, I shall be resigned! There is sweetness even in the thought. Could I credit all which my dear Lady Tinemouth affirms, the conviction that I possess one kind solicitude in the mind of Miss Beaufort, would be ample compensation for——"

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He did not finish the sentence, but sighing profoundly, rose from his chair.

"For any thing, except beholding her the wife of another!" was the sentiment with which his heart panted. Thaddeus had never known a selfish wish in his life; and this first instance of his desiring that good to be unappropriated, which he might not himself enjoy, made him start.

"There is a fault in my heart, a dreadful one!" Dissatisfied with himself, he was preparing to answer her ladyship's letter, when, turning to the date, he discovered that it had been written on Thursday night; and, in consequence of Nancy's neglect in not calling at the coffee-house, had been delayed a day and a half before it reached his hands.

His disappointment at this accident was severe. She was gone, and Miss Beaufort along with her!

"Then, indeed, I am unfortunate!" said he, holding the chain in his hand, and

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and looking on it; "I am at once deprived of all that rendered my forlorn existence in this town tolerable!"

He put the chain round his neck; and, with a true lover-like feeling, thought that it warmed the heart, which mortification had chilled; but the fancy was evanescent, and he again turned to watch the fading life of his friend.

During the lapse of a few days, in which the General appeared merely to breathe, Thaddeus, instead of his attendance, dispatched regular notes to Harley-street. In answer to these excuses, he commonly received little tender billets from Euphemia; the strain of which he seemed totally to overlook, by the cold respect he evinced in his diurnal apologies for absence.

This young lady was so full of lamentation over the trouble which her elegant tutor must endure in watching his sick friend, that she never thought it worth while to mention any creature in the

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house, except herself and her commiseration. Thaddeus longed to inquire about Miss Beaufort; but the more he wished it, the greater was his reluctance to write her name.

Things were in this situation, when one evening, as he was reading by the light of a solitary candle in his little sitting-room, the door opened, and Nancy stepped in, followed by a person wrapped in a large black cloak. Thaddeus rose.

"A lady, Sir," said Nancy, curtsying.

The moment the girl withdrew, the visitor cast herself into a chair, and sobbing aloud, seemed in violent agitation. The Count, astonished and alarmed, approached her, and though she was unknown, offered her every assistance in his power.

Catching hold of the hand, which with the greatest respect he extended towards her, she instantly displayed to his dismayed sight the features of Lady Sara Roos.

"Merciful

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"Merciful Heaven! exclaimed he, involuntarily starting back.

"Do not cast me off, Constantine!" cried she, clasping his arm, and looking up to him with a face of anguish, bathed in tears, "on you alone, I now depend for happiness! for existence!"

A cold damp stood on the forehead of her auditor. A tremor shook him from head to foot.

"Dear Lady Sara, what am I to understand by this emotion? Has any thing dreadful happened? Is Captain Roos —"

Lady Sara shuddered, and, still grasping his hand, answered in words, every one of which palsied the heart of Thaddeus with horror.—"He is coming home.—He is now at Portsmouth—O Constantine! I am not yet so debased as to live with him, when my heart is your's."

At this shameful declaration, Thaddeus clenched his teeth in fearful agony; and, striking his hand upon his closed

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eyes, to shut her from his sight, he turned suddenly round, and walked towards another part of the room.

Lady Sara followed him. Her cloak having fallen off, now displayed her fine form in all the fervour of grief and distraction; she wrung her snowy arms in despair; and, with accents rendered more piercing by the anguish of her mind, exclaimed, "What! You hate me? You throw me from you? Cruel, barbarous Constantine! Can you drive from your feet the woman who adores you? Can you cast her, who is without a home, into the streets?"

Thaddeus felt his hand wet with her tears; he fixed his eyes upon her with almost delirious horror. Her hat being off, gave a loose to her long black hair, which, falling in masses over her shoulders and eyes, gave such additional wildness to the imploring and frantic expression of those eyes, as distracted his soul.

"Rise,

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"Rise, Madam! For Heaven's sake, Lady Sara!" and he stooped to support her up.

"Never," cried she, covering her face with her hands, "never! till you promise to protect me. My husband comes home to-night, and I have left his house for ever. You, you!" exclaimed she, extending her arms to his averted face; "O Constantine! you have robbed me of my peace! On your account I have flown from my home.—For mercy's sake, do not abandon me!"

"Lady Sara," cried he, looking wildly round him, "I cannot speak to you in this position! Rise, I implore you!"

"Only," returned she, "only say that you will protect me! That I shall find shelter here! Say this, and I will rise, and bless you for ever."

Thaddeus knew not what to reply. Distressed by her imprudence, terror-struck at the violent lengths to which she seemed determined to carry her un-

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happy and guilty passion, he in vain sought to evade this direct demand; for Lady Sara, perceiving the reluctance and horror of his looks, sprang from her knees, and, in a more resolute voice, exclaimed, "Then, Sir, you will not protect me? You scorn and desert a woman, whom you well know has long loved you? Whom, by your artful behaviour, you have reduced to this disgrace!"

The Count, surprised and shocked at this accusation, with respectful gentleness, but resolution, denied the charge.

Lady Sara again melted into tears, and supporting her tottering frame against his shoulder, replied, in a stifled voice, "I know it well. I have nothing to blame for my wretched state, but my own weakness. Pardon, dear Constantine, the dictates of my madness! O! I would gladly owe such misery to any other source than myself!"

"Then, dear Lady Sara," rejoined Thaddeus,

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Thaddeus, gaining courage from the mildness of her manner, "let me implore you to return to your own house!"

"Don't ask me," cried she, grasping his hand; "O Constantine! if you knew what it was to receive with smiles of affection, a creature whom you loathe! you would shrink with disgust from what you require. I hate Captain Roos. Can I open my arms to meet him, when my heart excludes him for ever? Can I welcome him home, when I wish him in his grave?"

The Count extricated his hand from her grasp. Her ladyship perceived the repugnance which dictated this action; and clasping her hands together, ejaculated, "Unhappy woman that I am! to hate, where I am loved! to love, where I am hated!—Kill me, Constantine!" cried she, turning suddenly towards him, and sinking down on a chair; "but do not give me such another look as that!"

"Dear Lady Sara," replied he, seating

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himself by her side, "what would you have me do? You see that I have no proper means of protecting you. I have no mother, no sisters, no friends to receive you. You see that I am a *poor* man. Besides, your character——"

"Talk not of my character!" cried she, "I will have none that does not depend on you!—Cruel Constantine! you will not understand me. I want no riches, no friends, but yourself. Give me *your* home and *your* arms," added she, throwing herself in an agony on his bosom, "and beggary would be paradise!"

Thaddeus felt a dimness spread over his eyes. So much loveliness, such love, such disinterestedness, for a moment obliterated every other impression on his heart; but, recovering himself in an instant, he tore himself from her clinging arms, and staggering back a few paces, held her off with his hand, and, in

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in a voice of distraction, exclaimed, "Leave me, for pity's sake!"

"No, dearest Constantine!" cried she, aware of her advantage, and again casting herself at his feet, "Never, never, will I leave this spot, till you consent that your home shall be my home! That I shall serve you for ever!"

"All-powerful Heaven!" exclaimed Thaddeus, in an agony.

Lady Sara redoubled her tears and prayers.

"Seducing, dangerous woman!" cried he, looking at her with wild horror, "what is it you demand? Would you tear from me all that renders life bearable? Would you take from me a blameless conscience, and drive me to end my miserable days by a deed of desperation?"

Despair was in every feature of his countenance, as he uttered the last words, and flew from her into the apartment

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ment where the general lay asleep. Lady Sara, little expecting to see any one but the man she loved, rushed in after him, and was again pressing to throw her imploring arms about her determined victim, when her eyes were suddenly arrested by a livid, and, she thought, dead face of a person lying on the bed. Fixed to the spot, she stood for a moment; then putting her spread hand on her forehead, uttered a faint cry, and fell heart-struck and senseless on the floor.

Thaddeus, having instant conviction of her mistake, eagerly seized the moment of her insensibility to convey her home. He hastily went to the top of the stairs, called to Nancy to run for a coach, and then returning to the extended figure of Lady Sara, lifted her in his arms, and carried her back to the room they had left.

By the help of hartshorn and water, he restored her to a sense of existence She slowly opened her eyes; then rais-

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ing her head, looked round her with a terrified air, when her eye falling on the still open door of the General's room, she caught Thaddeus by the arm, and said, in a trembling voice, "O, take me hence."

Whilst she yet spoke, a coach stopped at the door. The Count rose, and attempted to support her agitated frame against his shoulder; but she trembled to such a degree, that he was obliged to throw his arm about her waist, and almost carry her down stairs.

When he placed her in the carriage, she said, in a faint tone, "You surely will not leave me?"

Thaddeus returned no other answer, than desiring Nancy to sit by the General until she saw him again; and stepping into the coach, Lady Sara snatched his hand, and bathed it with her tears.

"Whither are you going to take me?"

"You shall again, dear Lady Sara," replied

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replied he, "return to a guiltless and peaceful home."

"I cannot meet my husband;" cried she, wringing her hands, "he will see all my premeditated guilt in my countenance. O! Constantine, have pity on me! Miserable creature that I am!" added she, redoubling her grief, "It is *horrible* to live *with you!* It is *dreadful* to live *with him!* Take me not home I entreat you!"

The Count took her clasped hands in his.

"Reflect for a moment, my dear Lady Sara. I believe, if you love me, that it was in consequence of virtues which you thought I possessed."

"Indeed you do me justice!" cried she.

He continued.

"Think then, should I yield to the influence of your beauty, and plunge you into a situation like that——" and he pointed to a group of unhappy women assembled

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assembled at the corner of Pall Mall. Lady Sara drew back with a thrill of horror; "Think, where would be, not only your innocence, but its price? I being no longer worthy of your esteem, you would hate me; you would hate yourself; and we should continue together, two guilty creatures, a bhorring each other."

Lady Sara, drowned in tears, did not articulate any sounds but deep sighs, until the coach stopped in St. James's Place.

"Go in with me," were all the words she could utter, as pulling her veil over her face, she gave him her hand to assist her down the step.

"Is Captain Roos arrived?" asked Thaddeus of a servant, who, to his great joy, replied in the negative. During his ride, he had alarmed himself, by anticipating the disagreeable suspicions which might arise in the mind of the husband, should he see his wife in her present strange and distracted state.

When

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When Thaddeus seated Lady Sara in her drawing-room, he offered to take a respectful leave; but her ladyship getting up, laid one hand on his arm, whilst, with the other, she covered her convulsed features, and said, "Constantine, before you go; before we part, perhaps eternally; O! tell me that you do not hate me! That you do not *hate* me!" repeated she, in a firmer tone; "I know too well, how deeply I am despised."

"Cease, my dearest Madam," returned he, tenderly replacing her on the sofa, "cease these vehement expressions. Shame does not depend on possessing passions, but on yielding to them. You have conquered, Lady Sara; and, in future, I shall respect and love you as a dear friend. Whoever holds the first place in my heart, you shall always retain the second."

"Noble! generous Constantine!" cried she, straining his hand to her lips, and bathing

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bathing it with her tears; "I can require no more. May Heaven bless you wherever you go!"

Thaddeus dropt upon his knee; imprinted on both her hands a compassionate and fervent kiss; and rising hastily, quitted the room without a word.

CHAP.

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CHAP. VII.

THE dream-like consternation which enveloped the Count's faculties since the preceding scene, was dissipated next morning by the appearance of Dr. Cavendish. When he saw the General, he declared it to be his opinion, that in consequence of his long and tranquil slumbers, some favourable crisis was near:—"Probably," added he, "the recovery of his intellects. Such *phenomena*, in these cases, often happen immediately before death."

"Heaven grant it may in this!" ejaculated the Count; "to hear his venerable voice again acknowledge, that I have acted by him as became the grandson of his friend, would be a comfort to me."

"But, Sir," said the kind physician, touching his burning hand, "you must not

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not forget the cares which are due to your own life. If you wish well to the General during the few days he may have to live, you are indispensably obliged to preserve your own strength. You are already ill, and require air. I have an hour of leisure," continued he, pulling out his watch; "I will remain here, till you have taken two or three walks round the park. It is absolutely necessary; in this instant, I must take the privilege of friendship, and insist on obedience."

Thaddeus, seeing that the benevolence of the excellent Cavendish was resolute, took his hat, and, with harassed spirits, walked down the lane towards Charing-cross.

On entering Spring-garden gate, to his extreme surprise, the first objects which met his sight, were Miss Euphemia Dundas, and Miss Beaufort.

Euphemia accosted him with ten thousand inquiries respecting his friend, besides

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besides congratulations on his own good looks.

Thaddeus bowed; then smiling faintly, turned to the blushing Mary; who, conscious of what passed in the late conversation between herself and Lady Tinemouth, trembled so much, that fearing to excite the suspicion of Miss E. Dundas by such tremor, she withdrew her arm, and walked forward alone, tottering at every step.

"I thought, Miss Beaufort," said he, addressing himself to her, "that Lady Tinemouth was to have had the happiness of your company to Harwold-park?"

"Yes," returned she, fearfully raising her eyes to his face; the hectic glow of which, conveyed impressions to her, different from those which Euphemia expressed; "but, to my indescribable alarm and disappointment, the morning after I had written to fix my departure with her ladyship, my aunt's foot caught in the iron of the stair-carpet as she was coming

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coming down stairs, and throwing her from the top to the bottom, broke her leg. I could not quit her a moment during her agonies; and the surgeons having expressed their fears that a fever might ensue, I was obliged altogether to decline my attendance on the Countess!"

"And how is Mrs. Dorothy?" inquired Thaddeus, truly concerned at the accident.

"She is better, though confined to her bed," replied Euphemia, speaking before her companion could open her lips; "and, indeed, poor Mary, and myself, having been such close nurses, that my mother insisted on our walking out to-day."

"And Lady Tinemouth," returned Thaddeus, again addressing Miss Beaufort, "of course, she went alone?"

"Alas, yes!" replied she; "Miss Egerton was forced to join her family in Leicestershire."

"I believe," cried Euphemia, sighing, "that

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" that Miss Egerton is going to be married. Her's has been a long attachment. Happy girl! I have heard Captain Roos, whose Lieutenant, her intended husband was, declare that he is the finest young man in the Navy. Did you ever see Mr. Montresor?" added she, turning her pretty eyes on the Count.

" I never had that honour."

" Bless me! that is odd, considering your intimacy with Miss Egerton. I assure you he is very charming,"

Thaddeus neither heard this, nor a great deal more of the same trifling chit-chat, which was slipping from the tongue of Miss Euphemia; so intently were his eyes (sent by his heart,) searching the downcast, but expressive countenance of Miss Beaufort. His soul was full, and the fluctuations of her colour, with the embarrassment of her step, interested and affected him.

" Then you do not leave town for some time, Miss Beaufort;" inquired he,

" I may

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"I may yet anticipate the honour of seeing——" he hesitated a moment, then added, in a depressed tone—"your aunt, when I next wait on the Miss Dundasses."

"Our stay depends entirely on her health," returned she, striving to rally herself; "and I am sure she will be happy to see you better; for, I am sorry to say, that I cannot agree with Euphemia in thinking you look well."

"Merely a slight fever," replied he; "the effect of an anxiety, which I fear will too soon cease in the death of its cause. I came out now, for a little air only, whilst the physician remains with my friend."

"Poor old gentleman!" sighed Mary, "how venerable was his appearance the morning in which we saw him in the Park! What a benign countenance!"

"His countenance," replied Thaddeus, his eyes turning mournfully towards the lovely speaker, "is the emblem

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blem of his character. He was the most amiable of men."

"And you are likely to lose so interesting a friend? dear Mr. Constantine, how I pity you!" As Euphemia uttered these words, she put the corner of her glove to her eye.

The Count looked at her, and, perceiving that her commiseration was affectation, he turned to Miss Beaufort, who was walking pensively by his side, and made further inquiries respecting Mrs. Dorothy. Solicitous to be at St. Martin's Lane, he was preparing to quit them, when Mary, as with a full heart she curtsied her adieu, at last, in a hurried and confused manner, said—"Pray, Mr. Constantine, take care of yourself. You have other friends besides the one you are going to lose. I know Lady Tinemouth, I know my aunt——" she stopped short, and, covered with blushes, stood panting for another word to close the sentence; when Thaddeus, forgetting

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ing the presence of Euphemia, with delighted precipitancy, caught hold of the hand, which, in the energy of speaking, was a little extended towards him, and pressing it with fervour, relinquished it immediately: overcome by confusion at the presumption of the action, he bowed with agitation to both ladies, and hastened through the Friary passage into St. James's Street.

"Miss Beaufort!" cried Euphemia, reddening with vexation, and returning a perfumed handkerchief to her pocket; "I did not understand that you and Mr. Constantine were on such intimate terms!"

"What do you mean, Euphemia?"

"That you have betrayed the confidence which I reposed in you," cried the angry beauty, wiping away the really starting tears with her white lace cloak; "I told you that the elegant Constantine was the lord of my heart; and you have seduced him from me!

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'Till you came, he was so respectful, so tender, so devoted!—But I am rightly used! I ought to have carried my secret to the grave."

In vain Miss Beaufort protested; in vain she declared herself ignorant of possessing any power, over even one wish, of Constantine. Euphemia thought it monstrous pretty to be the injured friend and forsaken mistress; and all along the Park, and up Constitution Hill, until they arrived at Lady Dundas's carriage, which was waiting opposite Devonshire Wall, she affected to weep. When seated, she continued her invectives:—she called Miss Beaufort ungenerous, perfidious, traitor to friendship; and every romantic and disloyal name, which her inflamed fancy could devise; but the sight of Harley-street, checked her transports, and relieved Miss Beaufort from a load of impertinence and abuse.

During

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During this short interview, Thaddeus received an impulse to his affections, which hurried them forward with an impetuous rapidity, that neither time nor succeeding sorrows could stop or stem.

Mary's heavenly beaming eyes, seemed to have encircled his head with Love's brightest halo. The command, "Preserve yourself for others besides your dying friend," yet throbbed at his heart, with ten thousand rapturous visions dancing before his sight, he trod in air, until the humble door of his melancholy home, presenting itself, at once wrecked the illusion, and offered sad reality, in the person of his emaciated friend.

On the Count's entrance into the sick chamber, Doctor Cavendish gave him a few directions, to pursue when the General should awake from a sleep, in which he had been sunk, since the preceding night; and Thaddeus, with a

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heart still more depressed, from its late unusual exaltation, sat down on the bed for the remainder of the day.

At five in the afternoon, General Butzou awoke; seeing the Count, he stretched out his withered hand, and, as the Doctor predicted, accosted him rationally.

"Come, dear Sobieski! Come nearer, my dear master!"

Thaddeus rose, and throwing himself on his knees, took the offered hand with apparent composure: It was a hard struggle, to restrain the emotions, which were roused by this awful contemplation;—the return of reason to the soul on the instant, she was summoned into the presence of her Maker!

"My kind, my beloved Lord!" added Butzou, "to me, you have indeed performed a christian's part; you have clothed, sheltered, and preserved me in your bosom. Blessed son of my most honoured master!"

The

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The good old man put the hand of Thaddeus to his lips. Thaddeus could not speak.

"I am going, dear Sobieski," continued the General, in a lower voice, "where I shall meet your noble grandfather, your mother, and my brave countrymen: and if heaven grants me power, I will tell them by whose labour I have lived, on whose breast I have expired."

Thaddeus could no longer restrain his tears.

"Dear, dear General!" exclaimed he, grasping his hand; "my grandfather, my mother, my country! I lose them again in thee!—O! would the same summons take *me* hence!"

"Hush!" returned the dying man, "Heaven reserves you, my honoured lord, for wise purposes. Youth and health are the marks of commission: *You* possess them, with virtues, which will bear you through the contest. *I*

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have done; and my merciful Judge has evinced his pardon of my errors, by sparing me in my old age, and leading me to die with you."

Thaddeus pressed his friend's hand to his streaming eyes, and promised to be resigned. Butzou smiled his satisfaction; then, closing his eye-lids, he composed himself to a rest, that was neither sleep nor stupor, but a balmy serenity; which seemed to be tempering his late recovered soul, for its immediate entrance on a world of eternal peace.

At nine o'clock, his breath became broken, with quick sighs. The Count's heart trembled, and he drew closer to the pillow. Butzou felt him; and opening his eyes languidly, hardly articulated, (though not a sound escaped the ear of his friend,) "Raise my head."

Thaddeus put his arm under his neck, and lifting him up, reclined him against his bosom. Butzou grasped his hands,

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and looking gratefully in his face, said, "The arms of a soldier should be a soldier's bed. I am content."

He lay for a moment on the breast of the almost fainting Thaddeus; then suddenly quitting his hold, he cried, "I lose you, Sobieski!"

"I am here," exclaimed the Count, catching his motionless hand. The dying General murmured a few words of blessing; and, turning his face inwards, breathed his last sigh on the heart of his last friend.

For a minute, Sobieski remained incapable of thought or action. When he recovered recollection, he withdrew from his melancholy station; and, laying the venerable remains of the General on the bed, did not trust his rallied faculties with a second trial; but hastening down stairs, was met by Mrs. Robson.

"My dear Madam," said he, "all is over with my poor friend. Will you do

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me the kindness, to perform those duties to his sacred relics, which I cannot?"

Thaddeus would not allow any person to watch by his friend's coffin, besides himself. The meditations of this solitary night, presented to his sound and sensible mind, every argument, rather to induce rejoicing than regret, that the eventful life of the brave Butzou was terminated.

"Yes, illustrious old man!" cried he, gazing on his marbled features, "If valour and virtue be the true sources of nobility, thou surely wast noble! Inestimable defender of Stanislaus and thy country! thou hast run a long and bright career; and though thou art fated to rest in the humble grave of poverty, it will be embalmed by the tears of heaven; it will be engraven on my heart."

Thaddeus did not weep whilst he spoke.

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spoke. Nor did he weep, when he beheld the mould of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, close from his view, the last dwelling of his friend. It began to rain. Doctor Cavendish, putting his arm through the Count's, tried to pull him away; but he lingered a moment, and, looking on the dust, as the sexton piled it up, "Wretched Poland!" sighed he, "how far from thee, lies one of thy bravest sons!"

Doctor Cavendish regarded him with pity and admiration; but he vainly attempted to persuade him to return with him to dinner: Thaddeus refused the kind invitation; alleging with a faint smile, that under every misfortune, he found his best comforter to be solitude.

Doctor Cavendish, respecting the resignation and manliness of this answer, urged him no further; but expressing his regret, that they could not meet again until the end of the week, as he

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was obliged to go to Stamford next day, on a medical consultation: and, shaking hands with him, at the door of Mrs. Robson's, they parted.

CHAP.

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CHAP. VIII.

NEXT morning, when the Count Sobieski unfolded the several packets of papers, which were put into his hands by little Nancy, who brought his breakfast, he laid them, one after the other, on the table, and, sighing heavily, said to himself, "Now comes the bitterness of poverty!—Heaven only knows by what means I shall defray these terrific charges!"

The mere personal privations, induced by his fallen fortunes, excited little uneasiness in the mind of Thaddeus. As he never had derived peculiar gratification, from the enjoyment of a magnificent house, splendid table, and numerous attendants; he was contented in the field, where he slept on the bare ground, and snatched his hasty meal at

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at uncertain intervals. Watching, rough fare, and other hardships, were dust in the path of honour; he had dashed through them with light and buoyant spirits:—And he repined as little at the actual wants of his forlorn state in exile, until, compelled by friendship, to contract demands which he could not defray, he was plunged at once into the full horrors of poverty and debt.

He looked at the amount of the bills. The apothecary's was fifteen pounds; the funeral twenty. Thaddeus turned pale. The value of all that he possessed, would not produce one half of the sum; besides, he owed five guineas to his good landlady, for numerous little comforts, which she procured for his deceased friend.

Whatever be the consequence," cried he, "that excellent woman shall not suffer by her humanity! If I have to part with the last memorial of them who were so dear, she shall be repaid."

He

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He scarcely had ceased speaking, when Nancy re-entered the room, and told him, that the apothecary's young man, and the undertaker, were both below, waiting for answers to their letters. The Count, reddening with disgust at the unfeeling avidity of these men, desired Nancy to say, that he could not see either of them to-day, but would send to their houses to-morrow.

In consequence of this promise, the men made their bows to Mrs. Robson, (who too well guessed the reason of this message,) and took their leave.

When Thaddeus put the pictures of his mother and the Palatine, with other trinkets, into his pocket, he could not forbear an internal invective against the thoughtless meanness of the Miss Dundasses; who, since his entrance into their house, had never offered any farther liquidation of the large sum, which they now stood indebted to him, than the trifling note, which had been transmitted

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mitted to him, prior to his attendance, through the hands of Lady Tinemouth.

Whilst his necessities reproached them for this illiberal conduct, his proud heart recoiled at making a request to their charity; for he gathered, from the haughty demeanour of Miss Diana, that what he was entitled to demand, would be given, not as a just remuneration for labour received, but as alms of humanity to an indigent emigrant.

"I would rather perish," cried he, putting on his hat, "than ask that woman for a shilling."

When the Count laid his treasure on the table of the worthy pawnbroker, he desired to have the value of the settings, and the pictures put into leather cases. Mr. Burnet having examined the gold of the miniatures, with the other trinkets, declared, on the word of an honest man, that he could not give more than fifteen pounds.

With difficulty, Thaddeus stifled as torturing

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torturing a sigh as ever distended his breast, whilst he said—

"I will take it. I only implore you to be careful of the things! trifling as they are, circumstances with which they were connected, render them valuable to me."

"You may depend on me, Sir," replied the pawnbroker, presenting him with the notes and acknowledgement.

When Thaddeus took them, Mr. Burnet's eye was caught by the ring which he wore on his finger.

"That ring seems curious! If you won't think me impertinent, may I ask to look at it?"

The Count pulled it off, and forcing a smile, replied, "I suppose it is of little intrinsic value. The setting is antique, but the painting is fine."

Burnet breathed on the diamonds. "If you were to sell it," returned he, "I don't think it would fetch more than three guineas. The diamonds are damaged,

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damaged, and the emeralds would be of little use, being out of fashion here; as for the miniature, it goes for nothing."

"Of course," said Thaddeus, putting it on again; "but I shall never part with it." While he drew on his glove, Mr. Burnet asked him, whether the head was not intended for the King of Poland?

The Count, surprised, answered in the affirmative.

"I thought so," answered the man; "it is very like two or three prints which I had in my shop of that king. Indeed I believe I have them somewhere now: these matters are but a nine days wonder, and the sale is over."

His auditor did not clearly comprehend him, and he told him so.

"I meant nothing," continued he, "to the disparagement of the King of Poland; or of any other great personage, who is much the subject of conversation.

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versation. I only intended to say, that every thing has its fashion. The ruin of Poland was the fashionable topic for a month after it happened; and now nobody minds it; it is extinct; it is forgotten."

Thaddeus, in whose bosom all its miseries were written, with a clouded brow, bowed to the remarks of Mr. Burnet, and in silence quitted the shop.

Having arrived at home, he discharged his debt to the worthy Mrs. Robson; then entering his room, he laid the remainder of his money on the bills of the two claimants. It was unequal to the demands of either; yet, in some measure to be just to both, he determined on dividing it between them; and to promise the liquidation of the rest by degrees.

Surely he might hope, that, even should the Miss Dundasses entirely forget his claims on them, his labour could, in the course of time, make drawings sufficient

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sufficient to cover the residue of the debt! But he was not permitted to put this calculation to the trial.

When he called on the apothecary, and offered him five guineas, the man refused it with insolence, insisting upon having the whole. Unused to the language of compulsion and vulgarity, the Count quitted the shop, telling the man that he was at liberty to act as he thought fit; and, with no very serene countenance, he entered the undertaker's warehouse. This man was civil: to him Thaddeus gave the sum, half of which the apothecary had rejected with so much derision. The undertaker's politeness a little calmed the irritated temper of the Count, who returned home, musing on the vile nature of that part of mankind, which can with indifference heap insult upon distress.

Judging men by his own disposition, he seldom gave credence to the possibility of such conduct. He had been told

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told of dastardly spirits; but never having seen them, and possessing no prototype within his own breast of what he heard, the repeated relation passed over his mind without leaving an impression. He sprung into the world, filled with animating hopes of virtue and renown. He was virtuous; he became powerful, great, and renowned. Creation seemed paradise to his eyes: It was the task of adversity to teach him a different lesson of mankind. Not less virtuous, not less great, his fortunes fell, he became poor; the perfidy, the hard-heartedness of man, made, and kept him friendless. When he wanted succour and consolation, he found the world peopled by a race too mean, even to bear the stamp of the devil.

Whilst Sobieski was employed next morning at his drawing, Mrs. Robson sent Nancy to say, that there were two strange-looking men below, who wanted to speak with him. Not doubting that they

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they were messengers from the apothecary, he desired the girl to shew them up stairs. When they entered his room, the Count, with the politeness spontaneous to his ever-wakeful benevolence, rose. One of the men stepped forward, and laying a slip of paper on the table, said, "I arrest you, Sir, at the suit of Mr. Jackson, the apothecary."

Thaddeus coloured; but, suppressing every indignant emotion, he calmly asked the men, whither they were going to take him?

"If you like," replied one of them, "you may be well enough lodged. I never heard a word against Clement's in Wych-street."

"Is that a prison?" inquired Thaddeus.

"No, not exactly that, Sir;" answered the other man, laughing. "You seem to know little of the matter, which, for a Frenchman, is odd enough! But mayhap you have never a *lock-up-house* in

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in France? *Howsomever,* if you pay well, Mr. Clements will give you lodgings as long as you like. It is only *poor* rogues who are *obligated* to go to Newgate; such *Gemmen* as you, can live as *ginteelly* in Wych-street as at their own houses."

There was such an air of derision about this fellow, as he spoke and glanced round the room, that Thaddeus, sternly contracting his brows, deigned to take no further notice of him; but, turning towards his more civil companion, said:

"Has this person informed me rightly? Am I going to a prison, or am I not? If I do not possess money to pay Mr. Jackson, I can have none to spend elsewhere."

"Then you must go to Newgate!" answered the man, in as surly a tone as his comrade's had been insolent.

"I'll run for a coach, Wilson, cried the other, opening the room door.

"I will

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"I will not pay for one," said Thaddeus, at once comprehending the sort of wretches into whose custody he had fallen; "follow me down stairs. I shall walk."

"Mrs. Robson was in her shop as he passed to the street. She called out," "You will come home to-dinner, Sir?"

"No," replied he; "but you shall hear from me before night."

The men, winking at each other, sullenly pursued his steps down the Lane. In the Strand, Thaddeus asked them which way he was to proceed.

"Straight on," cried one of them; "most folks find the road to a goal easy enough."

Involved in thought, the Count walked forward, unmindful of the stare which the well known occupation of his attendants attracted towards him. When he arrived at Somerset-house, one of the men stepped up to him, and said, "We are now nearly opposite Wych-

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Wych-street. You had better take your mind again, and go there instead of Newgate. I don't much think you will like the debtor's hole."

Thaddeus, coldly thanking him, repeated his determination to be led to Newgate. But when he beheld the immense walls, within which he believed he should be immured for life, his feet seemed rooted to the ground: and when the massy gates were opened, and closed upon him, he felt as if suddenly deprived of the vital spring of existence. A mist spread over his eyes, his soul shuddered, and with difficulty he followed the men into the place where his commitment was to be ratified. Here, all the proud energies of his nature again rallied round his heart.

The brutal questions of the people in office, re-echoed by taunts from the wretches who had brought him to the prison, were of a strain, so much beneath his answering, that he stood perfectly

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fectly silent during the business; and, when dismissed, without evincing any signs of discomposure, followed the turnkey to his cell.

One deal chair, a table, and a miserable bed, were all the furniture it contained. The floor was paved with flags; and the sides of the apartment daubed with discoloured plaster, part of which having been peeled off by the damp, exposed to view large spaces of the naked stones.

Before the turnkey withdrew, he asked Thaddeus whether he wanted any thing?

"Only a pen, ink, and paper."

The man held out his hand.

"I have no money," replied Sobieski.

"Then you get nothing here," answered the fellow, pulling the door after him.

Thaddeus threw himself on the chair, and, in the bitterness of the moment, exclaimed,

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exclaimed, "Can these scoundrels be Christians? Can they be men?" He cast his eyes round him with the wildness of despair: "All powerful Heaven! Can it be possible, that, for a few guineas, I am to be confined in this place during life? In these narrow bounds, am I to waste my youth, my existence? Even so; I cannot, I will not, degrade the spirit of Poland, by imploring assistance from any native of a land, in which avarice has extinguished the feelings of humanity."

By the next morning, the first paroxysm of indignation having subsided, Thaddeus entertained a cooler and more reasonable opinion of his situation. He considered, that though he was a prisoner, it was in consequence of debts incurred in behalf of a friend, whose latter hours were rendered less wretched by such means. Knowing that, notwithstanding '*all that man could do unto him*,' he had brought an approving consci-

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ence, to lighten the glooms of his dungeon, he resumed his wonted serenity; and continued to distance the impertinent freedom of his gaolers by a stern dignity, which extorted civility, and commanded respect.

CHAP.

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CHAP. X.

SEVERAL days elapsed, without the inhabitants of Harley-street hearing any tidings of Thaddeus.

Miss Dundas never bestowed a thought on his absence, except when descanting on her favourite subject, "the insolence of dependant people," she alleged his daring to withdraw himself, as an instance. Miss Euphemia, uttered all her complaints, to Miss Beaufort; whom she accused, of not being satisfied with seducing the affections of Mr. Constantine; but she must also spirit him away, lest by remorse, he should be induced to renew his former devotion at the shrine of her tried constancy.

Mary found these secret conferences, very frequent and very teizing. She believed neither the Count's past devoirs to Euphemia, nor his present allegiance

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to herself. With anxiety, she watched the slow decline of every succeeding day, hoping, that each knock at the door, would present either himself, or an apology for his absence.

In vain her reason urged the weakness and folly of giving way to the influence of a passion, as violent as it was unforeseen. "It is not his personal graces;" murmured she, whilst her dewy eyes remained rivetted on the floor; "it is not they;—they have not accomplished this effect on me! No; matchless as he is; though his countenance, when illumined by the rare splendours of genius, expresses godlike beauty; yet, my heart tells me, I would rather see all that perfection demolished, than lose one beam of those bright charities, which first attracted my esteem. Yes, Constantine!" cried she, rising in agitation; "I could adore thy virtues, were they even in the bosom of deformity. t is these, that I love; it is these that

are

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are thyself! It is thy noble, god-like soul, that so entirely fills my heart; and will for ever!"

She recalled the hours, which in his society, glided so swiftly by, to pass in review before her. They came, and her tears redoubled. Neither his words, nor his looks, had been kinder to her, than to Miss Egerton, or Lady Sara Roos. She remembered his wild action in the Park: it had transported her at the moment; it even now made her heart throb; but she ceased to believe it intended more, than an animated expression of gratitude.

An adverse apprehension seemed to have taken possession of her breast. In proportion to the vehemence of Miss Euphemia's reproaches, (who insisted on the passion of Thaddeus,) she the more doubted the evidence of those delightful emotions, which had rushed over her soul, when she found her hand so fervently pressed in his.

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Euphemia never made a secret of the *tendresse* she professed: and Miss Beaufort, having been taught by her own heart, to read distinctly, the eyes of Lady Sara; the result of her observations, had long acted as a caustic on her peace: it robbed her cheeks of their bloom, and compelled her to number the lingering minutes of the night with sighs. But her deep and modest flame assumed no violence; retreated far from sight, it burnt the more intensely.

Instead of over-valuing the fine person of Thaddeus, the encomiums which it exacted even from the lips of prejudice, occasioned one source of her pain. She could not bear to think it probable, that the man, whom she believed, and knew, to be gifted with every attribute of goodness and of heroism; might one day be induced to sacrifice the rich treasure of his mind, to a creature, who would select him from the rest, merely on account of his exterior superiority.

Such

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Such was the train of Mary's meditations, when covering her face with her handkerchief, she exclaimed in a tender and interrupted voice, "Ah! Why did I leave my quiet home, to expose myself to the vicissitudes of society? sequestered from the world, neither its pageants nor its mortifications could have reached me there. I have seen thee, matchless Constantine! Like a bright star, thou hast passed before my eyes! Like a being of a superior order! And I never, never can debase my nature, to love another. Thy image shall follow me into solitude; shall consecrate my soul to the practice of every virtue! I will emulate thy excellence, when, perhaps, thou hast forgotten that I exist."

The fit of despondence, which threatened to succeed this last melancholy reflection, was interrupted by the sudden entrance of Euphemia. Miss Beaufort hastily rose, and drew her ringlets over her eyes.

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"O, Mary!" cried the little beauty, holding up her pretty hands, "What do you think has happened!"

"What?" demanded she in alarm, and hastening towards the door, "any thing to my aunt?"

"No, no:" answered Euphemia, catching her by the arm; "but could my injured heart derive satisfaction from revenge, I should now be happy. Punishment has overtaken the faithless Constantine."

Miss Beaufort look aghast; and grasping the back of a chair, to prevent herself from falling, breathlessly inquired what she meant?

"Oh! he is sent to prison!" cried Euphemia, not regarding the real agitation of her auditor, (so entirely was she occupied in appearing overwhelmed with distress herself,) and wringing her hands, she continued, in a whimpering voice; "that frightful wretch, Mr. Lascelles, is just come in to dinner. You cannot

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cannot think with what devilish glee he told me, that, about a week ago, as he was driving out of town, he saw Mr. Constantine, with two bailiffs behind him, walking down Fleet-street! And, besides, I verily believe, he said he had irons on."

"Father of Heaven!" ejaculated Mary, with a cry of terror at this *ad libitum* addition of Euphemia's, "What can he have done?"

"Bless my soul, child," returned Euphemia, staring at her, as she sat pale and trembling in a chair; "Why, what frightens you so? Does not every body run in debt, without minding it?"

Miss Beaufort shook her head; and, looking distractedly about her, put her hand to her forehead. Euphemia, now quite alarmed, forced her to drink some water; and, whilst the horror-struck Mary, with ten thousand vague and hideous fancies racking her heart, leaned against the wall; the little beauty, un-

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conscious what part of her narrative occasioned these emotions, thought to obliterate what she had said, by saying more; and determining not to be outdone in '*tender woe*,' drew forth her handkerchief, and putting it to her eyes, resumed in a piteous tone:—

"I am sure I shall hate Lascelles all my life, because he did not stop the men, and inquire what jail they were taking him to! You know, my dear, you and I might have visited him. It would have been delightful to have consoled his sad hours! We might have planned his escape."

"In irons!" ejaculated Mary, raising her tearless eye to heaven.

Euphemia coloured at the agonized manner in which these words were reiterated, and rather confusedly replied, "Not absolutely in irons. You know that is a metaphorical term for captivity."

"Then he was not in irons?" cried Miss

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Miss Beaufort, seizing her hand eagerly, "Tell me, for heaven's sake, tell me, he was not in irons?"

"Why then," returned Euphemia, half angry at being obliged to contradict herself; "if you are such a fool, that you cannot understand poetical language, I must tell you he was not."

Mary heard no further; but even at the moment when a bright glow overspread her countenance, fell back senseless into the chair.

Euphemia flew to the top of the stairs, and shrieking violently, stood wringing her hands, until Diana and Lady Dundas followed by several gentlemen, hastened out of the saloon, and demanded what was the matter? as Euphemia pointed to Miss Beaufort's dressing-room door, she staggered, and sinking into the arms of Lord Elesmere, fell into the most outrageous hysterics. The Marquis, who had just dropt in on his return from St. James's, was so afraid of the agitated

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agitated lady's tearing his point-lace ruffles, that, in almost as trembling a state as herself, he gladly shuffled her into the hands of her maid, and scampering down stairs, as if all bedlam were at his heels, sprung into his *vis-a-vis*, and drove off like lightning.

When Miss Beaufort opened her eyes, at the sight of such a crowd she almost relapsed; but, trying to dispel her confusion, she arose, and supporting herself on the arm of Mrs. Dorothy's maid, thanked the company for their attention, and desired to be assisted to her chamber.

Meanwhile, Euphemia, who had been carried down into the saloon, thought it time to raise her lily head, and utter a few incoherent words: the instant they were breathed, Miss Dundas and Mr. Lascelles, in one voice, demanded what was the matter?

"Has not Mary told you?" returned her sister, languidly opening her eyes.

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"No;" answered Lascelles, rubbing his hands with delighted curiosity; "Come, let us have it?"

Euphemia, pleased at this, and loving mystery with all her heart, waved her hand solemnly, and, in an awful tone, replied; "Then it passes not *my* lips."

"What, Phemy!" cried he, "you want us to believe that you have seen a ghost? But you forget, they don't walk at mid-day."

"Believe what you like," returned she, with an air of consequential contempt; "I am satisfied to keep the secret."

Miss Dundas burst into a provoking laugh; and calling her the most incorrigible little idiot in the world, encouraged Lascelles to join in the ridicule. Determining to gratify his spleen, if he could not satisfy his curiosity, this witless coxcomb continued the whole day in Harley-street, for the mere pleasure of tormenting Euphemia. From the dinner

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dinner hour, until twelve at night, neither his drowsy fancy, nor wakeful malice, could find one other weapon of assault, than the stale jokes of *mysterious chambers, lovers incognito*; or the silly addition of two Cupid-struck sweeps, popping down the chimney, to pay their addresses to the fair friends. Diana talked of Jupiter with his thunder; and, patting her sister under the chin, added, "I cannot doubt that miss Beaufort is the favoured Semelé: But, my dear, you over-acted your character! As confidant, a few tears were enough when your lady fainted." During these attacks, Euphemia reclined pompously on a sofa, and not deigning a reply, repelled them with much conceit and haughtiness.

Miss Beaufort remained above an hour alone in her chamber, before she ventured to go near her aunt. Hurt to the soul, that the idle folly of Euphemia should have aroused a terror, which had completely

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completely unveiled to the eyes of that inconsiderate girl, the empire which Thaddeus held over her fate; Mary, overwhelmed with shame, and arraigning her easy credulity, threw herself on the bed.

Horror-struck at hearing he was led along the streets in chains, she could have no other idea, but that, hurried into the commission of some dreadful deed, he was become amenable to the laws, and might suffer an ignominious death. These thoughts, having rushed at once on her heart, deprived her of all self-command. In the conviction that he was a murderer, she felt as if her life, her honour, her soul were annihilated. And when, in consequence of her agonies, Euphemia confessed that she had, in this last matter, told a falsehood, the tumult of her joy took refuge in insensibility.

Before Miss Beaufort quitted her room, various plans suggested themselves to

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relieve the unfortunate Thaddeus. She found no hesitation in believing him poor; and perhaps rendered wretchedly so, by the burthen of that sick friend, who, she suspected, might be some near relation. At any rate, she resolved that another sun should not pass over her head, and shine on him in a prison. Having determined to pay all his debts herself, she next thought of how she might manage the affair, without betraying the hand whence the assistance came. Had her aunt been well enough to leave the house, she could not have scrupled at unfolding to her the recent calamity of Mr. Constantine. But well aware that Mrs. Dorothy's maidenly nicety would be outraged, at a young woman appearing the sole mover in such a business, she conceived herself obliged, at present, entirely to withhold her confidence, and decide on prosecuting the whole transaction alone.

In consequence of these meditations, her

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her spirits became less discomposed; and, turning towards Mrs. Dorothy Somerset's apartments, she found the good old lady sipping her chocolate.

"What is this I have just heard, my dear Mary? Williams tells me you have been ill!"

Miss Beaufort returned her aunt's gracious inquiry with an affectionate kiss; and, proceeding to inform her, that she had only been alarmed by an invention of Miss Euphemia's; she begged that the subject might drop, it being merely one out of the many schemes, which she believed that young lady had devised to give her torment

"Ah!" replied Mrs. Dorothy, "I hope I shall be well enough to travel in the course of a few days! I can now walk with a stick; and, upon my word, I am heartily tired, both of Lady Dundas and her daughters."

Mary expressed similar sentiments with these; but, as the declaration passed

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passed her lips, a sigh almost buried the last word. Go when she would, she must leave Constantine behind; leave him, without an expectation of beholding him more; without a hope of penetrating the thick cloud, which involved him; and, with which, he had ever baffled any attempt to discover his birth or misfortunes. She wept over this refinement on delicacy, and '*loved him dearer for his mystery.*'

When the dawn broke next morning, it shone on Miss Beaufort's yet unclosed eyes. Sleep could find no languid faculty in her head, whilst her heart was agitated with plans for the relief of Thaddeus. The idea of visiting the coffee-house to which she knew the Miss Dundasses directed their letters, and of asking questions about a young and handsome man, made her timidity shrink.

"But," exclaimed she, "I am not going on an errand which could spread a blush on the cheek of prudery itself. I am

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I am going to impart alleviation to the sufferings of the noblest creature that ever walked the earth!"

Perhaps, there are few persons, who, being auditors of this speech, would have decided quite so candidly on the superlative by which it was concluded? Mary herself, was not wholly divested of doubt about the issue of her conduct; but, conscious that her motive was pure, she descended to the breakfast-room with quieter mind than countenance.

Never before, having had occasion to throw a false gloss on her actions, she scarcely looked up during breakfast. When the cloth was removed, she rose suddenly from her chair, and turning to Mrs. Dorothy, who sat at the other end of the parlour, with her foot on a stool, she said, "Good bye, aunt. I am going to make some particular calls; but I shall be back in a few hours." Luckily, no one observed her blushing face whilst she spoke, nor the manner in

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in which she shook hands with the old lady, and hurried out of the room.

Breathless with confusion, she could scarcely stand when she arrived in her own chamber; but aware that no time ought to be lost, she tied on a muslin cloak, covered her head with a large summer bonnet, and put a long shawl, with a veil, into her pocket. She hesitated a moment at her chamber-door; her eyes filled with tears, drawn from her heart by that keen spirit of truth which had even been the guardian of her conduct. Looking up to heaven, she sunk down on her knees, and exclaimed with impetuosity, "Father of Mercy! thou only, knowest my heart! Direct me, I beseech thee! Let me not commit any thing unworthy of myself, or of the unhappy Constantine—for whom I would sacrifice my life; but not my duty to thee!"

Re-assured by the confidence which this simple act of devotion inspired, she took

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took her parasol, and descended the stairs. The porter was alone in the hall. She inquired for her servant.

"He is not returned, Madam."

Miss Beaufort, having foreseen the necessity of getting rid of all attendants, had sent her footman on an errand as far as Cheapside.

"It is of no consequence," returned she to the porter, who was just going to propose one of Lady Dundas's men; "I cannot meet with any thing disagreeable at this time of day, so I shall walk alone."

The man opened the door; and Mary, with a bounding heart, hastened down the street, across the square, and at the bottom of Orchard-street, stepped into a hackney-coach, which she ordered to drive to Slaughter's coffee-house, St. Martin's-lane.

She drew up the glasses; then taking the shawl and veil, with trembling hands covered her graceful figure. Various thoughts

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thoughts agitated her anxious mind whilst the carriage rolled along; and when it drew up at the coffee-house, she involuntarily retreated into the corner. The coach-door was opened.

"Will you alight, Ma'am?"

"No; call the waiter."

A waiter appeared; and Miss Beaufort, in a tolerably collected voice, inquired if Mr. Constantine lived there?

"No, Ma'am."

A cold dew stood on her forehead; but taking courage from a latent and last hope, she added, "I know that he has had letters directed to this place."

"O! I beg your pardon, Ma'am!" returned the man, evidently recollecting himself; "I remember a person of that name has received letters from hence, but they were always fetched away by a little girl."

"And do you not know where he lives"

"No,

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"No, Ma'am;" answered he, "yet some one else may; I will inquire."

Miss Beaufort bowed her head in token of acknowledgment, and sat shivering with suspense, until he returned, followed by another man.

"This person, Ma'am," resumed he, "says he can tell you."

"Thank you, thank you!" cried Mary, then, blushing at her eagerness, she stopped, and drew back into the carriage.

"I cannot for certain," said the man, "but I know the girl very well by sight, who comes for the letters; and I have often seen her standing at the door of a chandler's shop, a good way down the lane. I think it is No. 5, or 6. I sent a woman there, who came after the same gentleman, about a fortnight ago. I dare say he lives there."

Miss Beaufort's expectations sunk again, when she found that she had nothing

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nothing but a *dare say* to depend on; and, giving half a crown to each of her informers, she desired the coachman to drive as they would direct him.

Whilst the carriage drove down the lane, with a heart full of fears, she looked from side to side, almost believing that she should know, by intuition, the house which had contained Constantine. When the man checked his horses, and her eyes fell on the little mean dwelling of Mrs. Robson, she smothered a deep sigh.

"Can this be the house in which Constantine has lived? How comfortless!—And should it not," thought she, as the man got off his box to inquire, "whither shall I go for information?"

The appearance of Mrs. Robson, and her immediate affirmative to the question, "Are these Mr. Constantine's lodgings?" at once dispelled this last anxiety. Encouraged by the motherly expression of the good woman's manner, Mary begged

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ged leave to alight. Mrs. Robson readily offered her arm; and, with many apologies for the disordered state of the house, led her up stairs to the room which had been the Count's home.

Mary trembled violently; but, seeing that every thing depended on self-command, with apparent tranquillity, she received the chair that was presented to her, and, turning her eyes from the books and drawings, which told her so truly in whose apartment she was, she desired Mrs. Robson, who continued standing, to be seated. The good woman obeyed; and, after some trepidation, she asked where Mr. Constantine was? Mrs. Robson coloured, and looking at her questioner for some time, as if doubting what to say, burst into tears.

Miss Beaufort's ready eyes were much inclined to flow in concert; but, subduing the strong emotions which shook her, she added, "I do not come hither out of impertinent curiosity. I have heard of

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the misfortunes of Mr. Constantine. I am well known to his friends."

"Dear lady!" cried the good woman, grasping at any prospect of succour to her benefactor; "If he has friends, whoever they are, tell them he is the noblest, most humane gentleman in the world. Tell them, he has saved me and mine from the deepest want; and now he is sent to prison, because he cannot pay the cruel doctor who attended the poor dead General!"

"What, is his friend dead?" ejaculated Mary, unable to restrain the tears which now streamed over her face.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Robson; "Poor old gentleman! he is dead sure enough; and, Heaven knows, many have been the dreary hours the dear young man has watched by his pillow! He died in that room."

Miss Beaufort's swimming eyes, would not allow her to discern objects, through the

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the open door of that apartment, within which, the heart of Thaddeus had undergone such variety of misery. Forming an irresistable wish to know whether the deceased were any relation of Constantine, she paused a moment to compose the agitation which might betray her, and then asked.

"I thought, ma'am," replied Mrs. Robson, "that you said you knew his friends?"

"Only his English ones," returned Mary, a little confused at the suspicion which this answer implied; "I imagined that this old gentleman might have been his father, or an uncle, or——"

"O no," interrupted Mrs. Robson, sorrowfully; "he has neither father, mother, nor uncle, in the wide world. He once told me that they were all dead, and that he saw them die. Alas! sweet soul! What a power of griefs he must have seen in his young life! But Heaven will favour him at last; for though he is

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in misfortune himself, he has been a blessing to the widow and the orphan!"

"Do you know the amount of his debts?" asked Miss Beaufort.

"Only thirty pounds," returned Mrs. Robson; "and for that they took him out of this room a week ago; and hurried him away without letting me know a word of the matter. I believe, to this hour, I should not have known where he was, if that brute, Mr. Jackson, had not come to demand all that Mr. Constantine left in my care. But I would not let him have it: I told the man, if my lodger had filled my house with bags of gold, *he* should not touch a shilling; and then the ill-natured wretch abused me, and told me Mr. Constantine was in Newgate."

"In Newgate!"

"Yes, Madam. I immediately ran there, and found him more able to comfort me, than I was able to speak to him."

"Then

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"Then be at rest, my good woman," returned Miss Beaufort, rising from her chair; "when you next hear of Mr. Constantine, he shall be at liberty. He has friends, who will not sleep till he is out of prison."

"May heaven bless you and them, dear lady!" cried Mrs. Robson, weeping with joy, "for they will release the most generous heart alive."

Mary cast a wishful look on the drawings which stood on a bureau; then, withdrawing her eyes with a deep sigh, she descended the stairs. At the street-door, she took Mrs. Robson's hand, and not relinquishing it until she was seated in the coach, pressed it warmly, and leaving within it a purse of twenty guineas, ordered the man to return whence he came.

Now that the temerity of going herself to learn the particulars of Mr. Constantine's fate had been achieved, determined as she was, not to close her

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eyes, whilst the man whom she valued above her life, remained a prisoner, and in sorrow, she thought it best to consult with Mrs. Dorothy respecting the speediest means of compassing his emancipation.

In Oxford-road, she desired the man to proceed to Harley-street. She alighted at Lady Dundas's door, paid the coachman his fare, and stepped into the hall, before she perceived that a travelling carriage, belonging to her guardian, had driven away to afford room for her humble equipage.

"Is Sir Robert Somerset come to town?" she hastily enquired of the porter.

"No, Madam; but Mr. Somerset is just arrived."

The next morning Miss Beaufort was in the drawing-room, and clasped within the arms of her cousin.

"Dear Mary!"—"Dear Pembroke!" were the first words which passed between these two affectionate friends.

Mrs.

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Mrs. Dorothy, who doated on her nephew, taking his hand fondly, as he seated himself between her and his cousin, said, in a congratulatory voice, "Mary, our dear boy has come to town purposely to take us down."

"Yes, indeed," rejoined he; "my father is moped to death for want of you both. You know that I am a sad run-about. Lord Arun and Mr. Loftus have been gone these ten days to his lordship's aunt's in Bedfordshire; and Sir Robert is so completely weary of solitude, that he has commanded me," bowing to the other ladies, "to run off with all the fair inhabitants of this house, sooner than leave you behind."

"I shall be happy at another opportunity to visit Somerset Castle," returned Lady Dundas; "but I am constrained so spend this summer in Dumbartonshire; I have not yet seen the estate my poor dear Sir Hector bought of the Duke of Dumfries!"

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Pembroke offered no attempt to shake this resolution. In the two or three morning calls, which he had made with Sir Robert Somerset on the rich widow, he saw sufficient to make him regard her arrogant vulgarity with disgust; and for her daughters, they were of too common a stamp to occupy his mind any longer than with a magic lantern impression of a tall woman with bold eyes, and the prettiest little blue-eyed fairy he ever beheld.

After half an hour's conversation with this family groupe, Miss Beaufort sunk again into abstraction. During the first month of Mary's acquaintance with Thaddeus, she did not neglect to mention in her correspondence with Pembroke, having met with a very interesting and accomplished emigrant, in the quality of a tutor at Lady Dundas's. But her cousin, in his replies, beginning to banter her on the plea of pity being allied to love, she gradually dropped all mention

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mention of his name, as she too truly found, by what insensible degrees the union had taken place within her own breast. She remembered these particulars, whilst a new method of attaining the desired end, suggested itself; and determining, (however extraordinary her conduct might seem,) to rest on the rectitude of her motives, she resolved, that as a man must be the properest person to transact such a business with propriety, she would engage Pembroke for her agent, without troubling Mrs. Dorothy about the affair.

So deeply was she absorbed in these reflections, that, Somerset, observing her vacant eye fixed on the opposite wall, took her hand, with an arch smile, and exclaimed,

"Mary! What is the matter? I hope, Lady Dundas, you have not suffered any one to run away with her heart? You know I am her cousin, and it is my unalienable right."

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Lady Dundas replied, that young ladies best knew their own secrets.

"That may be, Madam," rejoined he, "but I won't allow Miss Beaufort to know any thing that she does not transfer to me. Is not that true Mary?"

"Yes," whispered she, colouring; "and the sooner you afford me an opportunity to interest you in one, the more I shall be obliged to you."

Pembroke pressed her hand in token of assent; and a desultory conversation continuing for another half hour, Miss Beaufort, who dreaded the wasting of one minute in a day so momentous to her peace, sat uneasily, until her aunt proposed retiring to dress for dinner, and requested Pembroke to assist her up stairs.

When he returned to the drawing-room, to his extreme satisfaction he found that all the party were separated, excepting Miss Beaufort, who was standing by one of the windows, evidently

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lost in thought. He approached her, and taking her hand, led her back to the sofa she had quitted.

"Come, my dear cousin," said he, in an affectionate voice, "how can I oblige you?"

Mary struggled with her confusion. Had she loved Thaddeus less, she found she could with greater ease have related the interest which she took in his fate. She tried to speak distinctly, and she accomplished it; although her burning cheek and downcast look, told to the fixed eye of Pembroke, what she vainly attempted to conceal.

"You can, indeed, oblige me! You must remember a Mr. Constantine! I once mentioned him to you in my letters."

"I do, Mary. You thought him amiable!"

"He was the intimate friend of Lady Tinemouth," returned she, striving to look up, but the piercing expression, which

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which she met from the eyes of Somerset, beating her's down again, covered her face and neck with deeper blushes: she panted for breath.

"Rely on me;" said Pembroke, pitying her embarrassment, whilst he dreaded that her gentle heart had indeed become the victim of some accomplished and insidious foreigner, "Rely on me, my beloved cousin: consider me as a brother. If you have entangled yourself—"

Miss Beaufort guessed what he would say; and, interrupting him, added, with a more assured air, "No, Pembroke, I have no entanglements. I am going to ask your friendly assistance in behalf of a brave and unfortunate Polander." Pembroke reddened, and she went on. "Mr. Constantine is a gentleman. Lady Tinemouth tells me, he has been a soldier, and that he lost all his possessions in the ruin of his country. Her ladyship introduced him here: I have seen

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seen him often, and I know him to be worthy the esteem of every honourable heart. He is now in prison, in Newgate, for a debt of thirty pounds, and I ask you to go and release him? That is my request, my secret; and I confide in your discretion, that you will keep it, even from him."

"Dear, generous, lovely Mary!" cried Pembroke, kissing her hand, "it is thus that you always act! Possessed of all the softness of thy sex, dearest girl," added he, still more affectionately, "nature has not alloyed it with one particle of weakness!"

Miss Beaufort smiled and sighed: If to love tenderly, to be devoted, life and soul to one being, whom she considered as the most perfect work of creation, be weakness? Mary was the weakest of the weak; and, with a languid despondence at her heart, she was opening her lips to give some directions to her cousin, when the attentions of both

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both were arrested by a shrill noise of speakers talking above stairs. Before the cousins had time to make an observation, the disputants descended towards the drawing-room with a violent clamour, and bursting open the door, presented the enraged figure of Lady Dundas, followed by Diana, who, with a no less swollen countenance, was scolding vociferously, and dragging forward the weeping Euphemia.

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed Somerset, amazed at so extraordinary a scene, "What is the matter?"

Lady Dundas lifted up her clenched hand in a passion. "A jade! a hussy!" cried she, incapable to articulate more.

Miss Dundas, still grasping the hands of her struggling sister, broke out next, and turning furiously towards Mary, exclaimed, "You see, Madam, what disgrace your ridiculous conduct to that vagabond foreigner has brought on our family! This bad girl has followed your example

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example, and done worse; she has fallen in love with him!"

Miss Beaufort, shocked, and trembling at so rude an accusation, was unable to speak. Lost in wonder, and incensed at his cousin's goodness having been the dupe of imposition, Pembroke stood silent whilst Lady Dundas took up the subject.

"Ay," cried she, shaking her daughter by the shoulder, "You little minx! if your sister had not picked up these abominable verses, which you chose to write on the absence of this beggarly fellow, I suppose you would have finished the business by running off with him? But you shall go down to Scotland, and be locked up for months. I won't have Sir Hector Dundas's family disgraced by a daughter of mine."

"For pity's sake, Lady Dundas," said Pembroke, stepping between her vulgar ladyship and the trembling Euphemia, "do compose yourself. I dare say

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say your daughter is pardonable. In these cases, the fault in general lies with our sex. We are the seducers."

Mary was obliged to re-seat herself; and, with pale attention, she listened to the reply of the frightened Euphemia; who, half assured that her whim of creating a mutual passion in the breast of Thaddeus was no longer tenable, without either shame or remorse, exclaimed, "Indeed, Mr. Somerset, you are right, I never should have thought of Mr. Constantine, if he had not teized me every time he came with his violent love."

Miss Beaufort rose hastily from her chair. Though Euphemia coloured at the suddenness of this motion, and the immediate flash which she met from her eye, she went on; "I know Miss Beaufort will deny it, because she thinks he is in love with her; but indeed, indeed, he has sworn a thousand times on his knees, that he was a Russian noble-

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bleman in disguise, and adored me above every one else in the world."

"Scoundrel!" cried Pembroke, inflamed with indignation at this double conduct. Afraid to read in the expressive countenance of Mary, her shame and horror at this discovery, he turned his eyes on her with trepidation; when, to his surprise, he beheld her standing, perfectly unmoved, by the side of the sofa from which she had arisen. She advanced with a calm step towards Euphemia; and taking hold of the hand, which concealed her face whilst uttering this last falsehood, she drew it away; and regarding her with a serene but penetrating look, "Euphemia!" said she, "you well know, that you are slandering an innocent and an unfortunate man. You know, that never in his life, did he give you the slightest reason to suppose that he was attached to you! And as for myself, I can also clear him of making professions to me.

—Upon

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—Upon the honour of my word, I declare," added she, addressing herself to the whole groupe, "that he never breathed a sentence to me, beyond mere respect. By this last deviation of Euphemia from truth, you may form an estimate how far the rest she has alleged deserves credit."

The young lady burst into a vehement passion of tears: "I will not be browbeat and insulted, Miss Beaufort!" cried she, taking refuge in noise, since right had deserted her; "You know you would fight his battles through thick and thin! else you would not have fallen into fits yesterday, when I told you he was sent to jail."

This last assault struck Mary motionless; and Lady Dundas lifting up her hands, exclaimed, "Good Lord, keep me from the forward misses of these times!—As for you, Miss Euphemia," added she, seizing her daughter by the arm, "you shall leave town to-morrow morning.

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morning. I will have no more tutoring and falling in love in my house; and for you, Miss Beaufort," turning to Mary, who having recovered herself, stood at a little distance, "I shall take care to warn Mrs. Dorothy Somerset to keep an eye over your conduct."

"Madam," replied she, indignantly, "I shall never do any thing which can dishonour either my family or myself; and of that, Mrs. Dorothy Somerset is too well assured, to doubt for an instant, even should calumny be as busy with me, as it has been injurious to Mr. Constantine."

Miss Beaufort walked towards the door. When she passed Mr. Somerset, who stood bewildered, and frowning beside Miss Dundas, she said, in a collected and decisive voice, "Pembroke, I shall leave the room, but remember, I do not release you from your engagement."

Staggered by the open firmness of her manner,

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manner, he looked after her as she withdrew, and was almost inclined to believe, that she possessed the right side of the argument. Malice did not allow him to think so long. The moment the door closed on her, both the sisters fell on him pell-mell; and the prejudiced illiberality of the one, supported by the ready falsehoods of the other, soon dislodged all favourable impressions from the mind of Somerset, and filled him anew with displeasure.

In the midst of Diana's third harangue, Lady Dundas having ordered Euphemia to be taken to her chamber, Mr. Somerset was left alone more incensed than ever against Thaddeus, whom he now considered in the light of an adventurer, concealing his poverty, and perhaps his crimes, beneath a garb of lies. That such a character could, by means of his fine person, and a few meretricious talents, work himself into the confidence of Mary Beaufort, pierced her

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her cousin to the soul; and as he mounted the stairs with an intent to seek her in her dressing-room, he almost resolved to refuse obeying her commands.

When he opened the room door, he found Miss Beaufort with his aunt. The instant he appeared, the ever-benevolent face of Mrs. Dorothy contracted into a frown.

"Nephew!" cried she, "I shall not take it well of you if you give stronger credence to the passionate and vulgar assertions of Lady Dundas and her daughters, than you choose to bestow on the tried veracity of your cousin, Mary?"

Pembroke was conscious, that if his countenance had been a faithful transcript of his mind, Miss Beaufort did not err in supposing that he believed the foreigner to be a villain. Knowing that it would be impossible for him to relinquish his reason, into what he now denominated the partial hands of his aunt

and

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and cousin, he persisted in his opinion, to both the ladies, that their unsuspicious natures had been rendered subservient to knavery and artifice.

"I would not, willingly, my dear Madam," said he, addressing Mrs. Dorothy, "think so meanly of your sex, as to imagine, that an atrocity can exist in the female heart, which could give birth to cruel and unprovoked calumnies against an innocent man. I cannot suspect the Miss Dundasses of such needless guilt; particularly poor Euphemia, whom I pity. Lady Dundas forced me to read her verses; and they were too full of love and regret for this adventurer, to come from the same breast which could wantonly blacken his character. Such wicked inconsistencies in so young a woman, are not half so probable, as that you, my dear aunt and cousin, have been deceived."

"Nephew," returned the old Lady, "you are very peremptory. Methinks a little

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a little more lenity of opinion would better become your youth! *I* knew nothing of this unhappy man's present distress, until Miss Beaufort mentioned it to me; but before she breathed a word in his favour, I had conceived a very high respect for his merits: from the first hour in which I saw him, I gathered by his deportment and conversation, that they were far above his fortunes. I thought so; I still think so; and, notwithstanding all which the Dundasses may chuse to fabricate, I am determined to believe the assertions of an honest countenance."

Pembroke smiled, whilst he forced his aunt's reluctant hand into his, and said, "I see, my dear Madam, that you are bigoted to the idol of your own fancy! I do not in the least doubt this Mr. Constantine's enchantments; but you must pardon me, if I keep my senses at liberty. I shall think of him, as I could almost swear he deserves, although

I am

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I am aware that I hazard your affection by my firmness." He then turned to Mary, who, with a swelling and distressed heart, was standing by the chimney; "Forgive me, my dearest cousin," continued he, addressing her in a softened voice; "that I am forced to appear harsh. It is the first time I ever dissented from you; it is the first time I ever thought you prejudiced!"

Miss Beaufort drew the back of her hand over her glistening eyes. All the tender affections of Pembroke's bosom smote him at once; and throwing his arms round his cousin's waist, he strained her to his breast, and added, "Ah! why dear girl, must I love you better for thus giving me pain? Every way, my darling Mary is more estimable. Even now, whilst I oppose you, I am sure, that though your goodness is abused, it was cheated into error, by the affectation of honourable calamities!"

Miss

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Miss Beaufort thought, "that if the prudence of reserve and decorum dictates silence in some circumstances, in others, a prudence of an higher order would justify her in declaring her sentiments." Accordingly, she withdrew from the clasping arms of Mr. Somerset; and whilst her beautiful figure seemed to dilate into more than its usual dignity, she mildly replied,

"Think what you please, Pembroke; I shall not contend with you: Mr. Constantine is of a nature not to be hidden by obscurity; his character will defend itself: and all that I have to add is this, I do not release you from your promise. Could a woman transact the affair with propriety, I would not keep you to so disagreeable an office; but I have passed my word to myself, that I will neither '*slumber* nor *sleep*,' till he is out of prison." She put a pocket-book into Pembroke's hand, and added, "Take that,

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my dear cousin; and without suffering a syllable to transpire, by which he may suspect who served him, accomplish what I have desired."

"I will obey you, Mary," returned he, looking grave; "but I am sorry that such rare enthusiasm was not awakened by a worthier object. When you see me again, I hope I shall be enabled to say, that your ill-placed generosity is satisfied."

"Fie, nephew, fie!" cried Mrs. Dorothy, "I could not have supposed you capable of conferring a favour so ungraciously."

Mr. Somerset, pained at what he called the obstinate infatuation of Miss Beaufort; and, if possible, more chagrined by what he considered the blind and absurd encouragement of his aunt, lost the whole of her last reprimand in his hurry to quit the room.

Disturbed, displeased, and anxious, he stepped into a hackney-coach; and, ordering

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dering it to drive to Newgate, determined to go through the business without exposing himself to an interview with a man whom he condemned as an artful and unprincipled villain.

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